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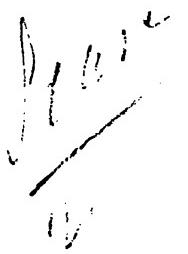
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CHARLES SUMNER
CLASS OF 1830
SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

FOR BOOKS RELATING TO
POLITICS AND FINE ARTS









THE
S T A T E
IN ITS
RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH.

BY
William Ernest
W. E. GLADSTONE, Esq.,
LATE STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH, AND M.P. FOR NEWARK.

Διάσπερος οἱ παλαιοὶ δοκοῦσι μοι τὰς περὶ θιᾶν ἴνοις, καὶ τὰς περὶ τῶν ιἱῶν διατήνουσι
οὐκ εἰλῆ καὶ μὲν θευχαῖς τὰ πλάτη παρισταγαγοῦν· πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον οἱ νῦν εἰλῆ καὶ
ἀλέγοντες ιεράλλων εἰνται.—Polyb. VI. 56.

FOURTH EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET;
AND HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCXLI.

~~EE.879~~

C 10250.4

C 10248.4!

1880, June 8.
Summer fund.
(Ed. 2, II.)

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and SONS,
Stamford Street.

26-18
26-2

INSCRIBED TO

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THROUGH THE VICISSITUDES OF A THOUSAND YEARS;

IN THE BELIEF THAT SHE IS PROVIDENTIALLY DESIGNED TO BE

A FOUNTAIN OF BLESSINGS,

SPIRITUAL, SOCIAL, AND INTELLECTUAL,

TO THIS AND TO OTHER COUNTRIES,

TO THE PRESENT AND FUTURE TIMES;

AND IN THE HOPE THAT THE TEMPER OF THESE PAGES MAY BE FOUND

NOT ALIEN FROM HER OWN.

London, August, 1838.



P R E F A C E

TO

THE FOURTH EDITION.

IN the years 1837 and 1838 the general sentiment of the English people in favour of the national Establishment of religion was very powerfully aroused. When an access of strong public feeling has taken place, upon a subject related to the permanent institutions of the country, it is pretty certain that the emotion will clothe itself in some intellectual forms; but it is not similarly to be assumed that it will discover and appropriate to itself those which are most conformable to truth.

It appeared to me a contingency greatly to be feared, that the affections then called into such vivid action, in a great degree through political circumstances, might satisfy themselves with a theory which teaches, indeed, that the State should support religion, but

neither sufficiently explores the grounds of that proposition, nor intelligibly limits the religion so to be supported; and which also seems relatively to assign too great a prominence to that kind of support which taxation supplies. Such a theory would probably be found to guarantee neither purity of faith, nor harmony nor permanence of operation.

In these circumstances is to be found my apology for having presumed to tender to the public a volume on the relations of the State to the Church, with a free and deeply sincere confession of what must indeed have been obvious to every one else, even if on my own part unavowed, namely, that it had no pretensions to the character of an adequate* development of the profound and comprehensive question to which it relates.

Lamenting, as I then did, in part the insufficiency† for practical purposes, but much more the grave and positive faults which had appeared to me to attach to the theories of some earlier and much abler writers upon the relations between the Church or religion on the one hand, and the State on the other, I was perfectly aware that my own effort could not be otherwise than obnoxious in many respects to merited

* Chap. viii. § 53, of the first edition.

† Ibid., chap i. § 8.

censure. In the tone with which such censure has been pronounced I find nothing to complain of. In some most important misapprehensions of my meaning I see no cause for surprise, and I think it right to set them down in far greater proportion to my own account than to that of my readers.

It has been a prominent objection, that the doctrine of a conscience in the nation or the State implies or has a tendency towards exclusion, and even persecution. In this place I only answer by the following general question. What political or relative doctrine is there, which does not become an absurdity when pushed to its extremes? The taxing power of the State, the prerogatives of the Crown to dissolve Parliaments and to create peers, the right of the House of Commons to withhold supplies, the right of the subject, not to civil franchises only, but even to security of person and property,—all these, the plain uncontested rules of our constitution, become severally monstrous and intolerable when they are regarded in a partial and exclusive aspect. I do not wonder that the same effect should follow, when the doctrine of conscience in the State is viewed without regard to its limiting conditions.

Attention should be directed to social principles in

such modes and measures as may be most adapted to neutralise the besetting dangers of each particular period. In an age which leaned towards a rigidly ecclesiastical organisation of the State, it was wise and laudable to plead warmly for the rights of the individual conscience. In an age which inclines to secularise the State, and ultimately to curtail or overthrow civil liberty by the subtraction of its religious guarantees, to declaim against intolerance becomes a secondary duty, and it is infinitely more important, and as it seems to me more rational, to plead earnestly for those great ethical laws under which we are socially constituted, and which economical speculations and material interests have threatened altogether to subvert. I do not therefore repent my effort; but I repent of its numberless imperfections, and deplore the prejudicial results which they must have had in obstructing my general design.

The lapse of time and the opportunities it has given for reflection, and the remarks both of those friendly to my general view and of those opposed to it, have brought out into much clearer consciousness the confession I made two years and a half ago, with a strong but less determinate conviction of its truth; and have rendered me fully aware of obscurities that required

to be cleared up, and of omissions that it was needful to supply. My best care and labour have been bestowed upon this task, inadequate as they are to its due fulfilment.

I am not ashamed to own, that the material changes now effected in the form of this work are in the nature of practical acknowledgments in detail of its former faults as a book upon a portion of political science. I am not ashamed, further, to repeat my full belief that it is still most defective; although I trust that it is now brought somewhat nearer to the form of such kind of demonstrative process as the subject-matter will admit, and although I see no reason to suppose that it will be hereafter my duty to repeat anything like the operation which I have now performed. If there be any, however, who think that no man should write upon a subject of political science until he is so completely master of it as to give it *vice simplici* a perfect development, I would remind him of the opinion of Lord Bacon, who says that politics are, of all subjects, “most immersed in matter, and hardliest reduced to axiom:”* and of that of Algernon Sidney, a masculine and powerful, though far less profoundly philosophic mind, that “the political

* *Advancement of Learning.*

science . . . of all others is the most abstruse and variable, according to accidents and circumstances.”*

I have only to add, that while, warned by experience, I have been careful to guard against some misapprehensions of my meaning, the spirit and intention of the book, and the principles upon which its whole argument was constructed, remain altogether unchanged. Nor am I aware that a single sentence or expression has been added, which at the time of its first publication I should have been inclined to disavow.

* Sidney on Government, ch. ii. sect. 8.

London, April 3, 1841.

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THE STATE
IN ITS
RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

1. PROBABLY there never was a time in the history of this country, when the connection between the Church and the State was threatened from quarters so manifold and various as at present. The infidel, with sagacious instinct, follows out all that tends to the general diminution of religious influences; and, tolerant of the union in those periods of ease and slumber when separation might at least have had the effect of awakening the Church to her duties, exclaims against it at a time when its spiritual purposes and obligations begin to be more truly appreciated. The Romanist (with some exceptions), in order to erect his own structure of faith and discipline, now seems to aim first at the demolition of every other, and to deem us so involved in fatal error, that we must pass through the zero of national infidelity in order to arrive at truth. Some of the professors of political economy, who assign to the undigested materials of a future science preroga-

tives far more exalted and exclusive than it will be entitled to claim in its maturity, regard this ancient connection as a visionary theory, only and mischievously known by its tendency, when obtruded into practice, to interfere with what they hold to be pre-eminently the substantial interests of mankind ;* the democrat, who, by the very law of his condition, naturally desires to strip government of all its highest duties, and leave to it the performance of no more than mechanical functions : of all these it was perhaps, on the whole, to be expected that they should unite, upon any seemingly favourable occasion, to press towards their common object ; and they have so united.

2. But some others of a different stamp † are beginning to view the connection of Church and State with an eye of indifference, or even of suspicion. These are men dutiful to the State, but more affectionately and intimately cleaving to the Church ; men who, though unwilling to regard the two as in any sense having opposite interests, are nevertheless wearied, perhaps exasperated, at the injustice which has been done of late years, or rather during recent generations, by the temporal to the spiritual body. I do not mean that there has been any absolute or conscious alienation of sentiment ; but only (and it is enough) that, through the secular or carnal principle working in every one of us, the State has too generally perverted and abused

* See, for example, the preface to the 'Principles of Political Economy,' by Mr. Poulett Scrope, M.P.

† British Magazine, April, 1836, p. 363.

the institutions of the Church by unworthy patronage, has crippled or suppressed even her lawful powers, and, lastly, when those same misdeeds have raised an energetic though partial sentiment of disfavour against its ally, has evinced an inclination to make a separate peace, and surrender her to the will of her adversaries. Such being the case, we can hardly wonder, though we may lament it, that a very few of the attached members of the Church are growing cool in their approbation of the connection, possibly not without the influence of a nascent and unconscious resentment; and, while they seem at least to waver upon the question, there are others far more numerous who, although they are themselves unshaken in their attachment to the principle, yet defend it upon grounds untenable for their purpose, and better fitted to be occupied as positions against them.

3. Yet the mass of the people remains firm in its adhesion to the ancient principles of the Constitution and the Church. It appears still to be their belief that the connection of Church and State, rescued on the one hand from the Papal, and on the other from the Erastian, exaggeration of the relation of either power to the other, is conformable to the will of God, essential to the permanent well-being of a community, implied and necessitated by every right idea of civil government, and calculated to extend and establish the vital influences of Christianity, and therewith to increase and purify the mass of individual happiness. And as the circumstances of the day demand that the

holders of that belief should now be busy and strenuous in its defence, so also, if their agency is to be effective, permanent, and conscientious, must they be earnest and patient in its examination.

4. The point of view from which it is now proposed to contemplate and discuss the question, is that which men occupy as members of a State; and the aim is to show, that the highest duty and highest interest of a body politic alike tend to place it in close relations of co-operation with the Church of Christ. It is from this position that I propose to regard it; first, because the combatant in defensive warfare naturally resorts ἐπὶ τὸ κάμπον, to the quarter which is threatened and in danger; because the Church is not likely to be the moving party in measures for the dissolution of this connection, while the State has, it is too certain, given signs, though I believe unconsciously, of that inclination; and therefore it is the mind of the State, not of the Church, which requires to be more fully exercised upon this subject, in order to the better knowledge and fulfilment of its duty.

5. But besides the fact that we are more ignorant of our duty as citizens than as churchmen, in respect of the connection, we shall find another reason for instituting the investigation in the former capacity rather than the latter. The union is to the Church of secondary though great importance. *Her* foundations are on the holy hills. Her charter is legibly divine. She, if she should be excluded from the precinct of government, may still fulfil all her functions, and

carry them out to perfection. Her condition would be anything rather than pitiable, should she once more occupy the position which she held before the reign of Constantine. But the State, in rejecting her, would actively violate its most solemn duty, and would, if the theory of the connection be sound, entail upon itself a curse. We know of no effectual preservative principle except religion; nor of any permanent, secure, and authenticated religion but in the Church. The State, then, if she allows false opinions to overrun and bewilder her, and, under their influence, separates from the Church, will be guilty of an obstinate refusal of truth and light, which is the heaviest sin of man. It is, accordingly, of more importance to our interests as a nation, that we should sift this matter to the bottom, than to our interests as a Church. Besides all which, it may be shown that the principles, upon which alone the connection can be disavowed, tend intrinsically and directly to disorganisation, inasmuch as they place government itself upon a false foundation.

6. These are the main reasons for handling the question in that sense which most applies to individual Christians, anxious to be informed how they may best discharge their duties in respect of this connection, as members of the State: while, at the same time, we shall find ourselves led by the proposed inquiry to exactly the same conclusion, as if, setting out from an opposite quarter, we were called upon to assist in directing the operations of the Church, with reference

to the best means of extending its utility. There is a substantial conformity between our several duties, though not always an apparent one. The only question is, respecting the order of the processes by which they are demonstrated.

7. Further, the argument which follows is not specifically addressed to infidels; hardly, indeed, to persons in a state of systematic separation from our national Church; nor, on the other hand, to such as have deliberately considered all its conditions, and their own obligations as its members; but to those, who form the mass of the educated community, and whose minds have imbibed a general belief of the lawfulness and duty of the public support of religion, yet without any clear and reasoned conclusions either upon the grounds or the limits of that duty. I presume, therefore, on but a very small portion of favourable predispositions in the mind of the reader, while I shall hope to show him, that a sincere believer in no more than the general principle of Theism will, upon looking attentively at the nature and necessities of the State, and its capabilities in respect of religion, be led on, by regular and progressive inferences, to the full adoption of the principle which demands the continued union of the Church with the constitution of the country.

8. Our principal inquiry, however, is into the grounds and reasons of the alliance, not into its terms. The precise arrangements, by which the respective rights of the contracting parties are to be preserved,

are matter of very great importance, but they are entirely distinct from the preliminary question, whether they ought to be contracting parties at all; and perhaps we shall scarcely have reached the time for discussing the first with advantage, until our policy and the tone of public opinion shall have shown, beyond all doubt, that the latter is set at rest. There are indeed, points of contact between the two subjects, but they are incidental; and it is enough here to indicate that which is the specific object of these pages, and which constitutes an object of adequate magnitude when taken alone: while the other, it is true, is not less important than neglected. Milton* wrote to Sir Harry Vane the younger,

— — — — besides, to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learnt, which few have done:

and the praise which was rarely due in his days ought, I fear, to be still more rarely given in our own. For then was the time of Selden and of Falkland; the time when the polished society that met in the mansion of the latter, not far from Oxford, spent its hours in the pursuit of truth, or, according to Lord Clarendon, in a perpetual *convivium philosophicum*, or *convivium theologicum*.†

9. But the phraseology which it has been usual to employ may suggest another question—how far are we to consider the alliance of Church and State as an historical compact? I cannot but think that the

* Sonnet xvii.

† Clarendon, Life, i. 47.

representation of the relation between sovereign and subject was unworthily and unfortunately, as well as inaccurately, handled, when it was exhibited as dependent upon the fiction of an original compact. This is both a rude and a feeble manner of representing duties to which no date can be assigned, and it much more than loses in truth and in impressiveness what it may gain in clearness and facility. It was doubtless intended to strengthen the sense of personal obligation; but it produced a very opposite result, because it seemed to found on option, and on a computation of results, what is indeed more deeply based in the original constitution of our nature. The same objections will apply in a more limited degree to the application of a similar phraseology to the connection between the Church and the State. There is this difference between the two. In the case of civil society, the relation has in general been practically recognised and its duties fulfilled long before any notion of a compact in specific terms has been entertained; and the only pretext for such language as that of Locke is found in the fact, that it may have been necessary in the course of time to define and modify the general relation by verbal conditions. In the case of State religion, we should probably find it impossible, for the most part, to define its historical commencement; but we can usually mark the period when the powers of this world, in their respective spheres, began to own submission to Christ, so that the contract or alliance has here a substantial basis in history. But that basis

has not usually been one of deliberate forethought, of prudential calculation, or of scientific accuracy.

10. In our own country, for example, we may say with justice that the alliance of Church and State was formed between Ethelbert and Augustine in the sixth century. But what was done was probably little more than a trustful obedience to the simple impressions of conscience. The relation thus historically, but indeterminately, established, was developed and embodied in forms of greater precision at different periods of our history—as, for example, in the reigns of Henry II., of Edward III., of Henry VIII. and his successors down to Charles II. The peculiar arrangements, or a portion of them, by which effect is given to the principle, may, without violation of truth, be referred to positive stipulation. But the principle itself is an obligation antecedent to all verbal and determinate expression ; and it is acknowledged by, not founded on, the assent of the contracting parties. By the “compact” between Church and State and its conditions, we may properly express the particular forms and acts, in which the objective truth of the relation has taken practical effect ; only let not the superstructure be mistaken for the foundation.

11. It does not appear that our literature is well supplied with works which would meet the necessity above described, and furnish men with sufficient principles (*axiomata summa*) upon the fundamental conditions of the union between the Church and the State. Hooker looked at the question under influences de-

rived from the general controversy with the Puritans, and he is much more ample and satisfactory on the terms than on the grounds of the connection. Bishop Warburton has written upon it with much acuteness and ability, but in the dry and technical manner of a man who lived in times when there was no strong pressure in one direction requiring to be warmly and feelingly met from another. The splendid representation delineated by Burke can stand in need, I should admit, of nothing but to be reduced to method and expanded into detail. The extreme beauty of the sketch in its present form may intercept the attention of a reader, and prevent his being adequately impressed with its philosophic soundness; but it seems to imply, even where it does not express, the whole truth of the subject. The work of Paley on Moral and Political Philosophy is a storehouse of anything rather than sound principles, although there are many parts of its details which may be useful in affording direct instruction; as, for example, his account of the formation of governments. Coleridge has dealt admirably with the question in his 'Idea of Church and State'; but his conception demands from his readers a greater share of the power and habits of abstraction than we can expect to find beyond the limits of a very small class; and it does not, I think, contain all the elements of the subject, though it precludes none. Dr. Chalmers has handled some points connected with this inquiry in a manner the most felicitous; but, in other parts of his recently published lectures, he has laid down

positions that are not less seriously detrimental to our cause. None of these writers, who have handled their subject in form, regarded it precisely in the aspect most requisite and available for present circumstances: namely, that which shows that governments are, by “dutiful necessity,” cognisant of religious truth and falsehood, and bound to the maintenance and propagation of the former. Some time, however, will be well spent in succinctly regarding the respective theories of the above-mentioned authors.

12. If the 6th, 7th, and 8th books of the ‘Ecclesiastical Polity’ are to be taken as representing the opinions of Hooker, at least they cannot be said to do so with the accuracy, nor consequently with the degree of authority, which belongs to the earlier and larger portion of the work. In the 8th book, however, he teaches,* that the same persons compose the Church and the commonwealth of England, universally; that the same subject † is therefore intended under the respective names of Church and Commonwealth; and it is thus variously named only in respect of accidents, or properties and actions,‡ which are different. His opponents contended for a personal separation, which precluded the same man from bearing sway in both; he for a natural one, which did not forbid such a union of authorities.§ “The Church and the Commonwealth are in this case, therefore, personally one society, which society” is “termed a Commonwealth,

• Ecclesiastical Polity, book viii. c. i. 2. † Ib. c. i. 5.
 ‡ Ib. c. i. 2. § Ib. c. i. 2.

as it liveth under whatsoever form of secular law and regiment—a Church, as it hath the spiritual law of Jesus Christ.”* Banishment, however, casts out of the Church; but excommunication does not cast out of the Commonwealth.

13. In this society, considered as a church, the king is “the highest uncommanded commander.”† He holds his entire office under the law, and by the willing consent and subjection of the people, though still by divine right, even while at man’s discretion.‡ His chief ecclesiastical powers are, the title of headship; the right of calling and dissolving the greater assemblies; that of assent to all church orders, which are to have the force of law; the advancement of prelates; the highest judicial authority; and in general an exemption from the ordinary church censures to which others are liable, at least from excommunication: but the question of this last he declines to determine.§ The conveyance of power is not to each sovereign in succession, but to one originally, from whom the rest inherit; and the body cannot help itself, but with consent of the head, while there is one. The king’s judicial power is subject to church law; and it is the head of all, simply because not confined to a district, but legally reaching to all.|| Regal power¶ is not naturally limited to the good of men’s

* Compare the theory of Marheineke, stated and criticised in Stahl’s Kirchenverfassung der Protestantent, iii. 2, p. 125.

† Ecclesiastical Polity, book viii. c. ii. 1. ‡ Ib. c. ii. 6. § Ib. c. ix. 2.
|| Ib. c. viii. 1. ¶ Ib. c. iii. 2.

bodies. Kings have “authority* over the church, if not collectively, yet divisively understood; that is, over each particular person in that church where they are kings.” He does not contend for the particular† title of head to be applied to the sovereign, if that be offensive. The subject in which this power is to reside‡ need not be *one* personally. The commonwealth, when the people are Christians, being *ipso facto* the church, the clergy alone ought not to have the power of making laws§ “*Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet.*” And historically the fact is,|| that canons of the clergy in their synods have generally taken no effect as *laws* without the approbation of governors; not even those of the council of Trent in Romish kingdoms. Until that approbation, they are but the opinions of wise men on the subject-matter. The parliament, by 1 and 2 Phil. and Mar. c. 8, ratified by enactment the cardinal-legate’s dispensation, to give it the force of law. The king’s power of assent is a power derived to him from the whole body of the realm.¶ Secular courts here regulate secular causes, spiritual courts spiritual causes. The religious duty of kings was “the weightiest part of their sovereignty,”** even while heathens. Do they then lose it, he asks, by embracing Christianity?

14. I have now extracted matter enough to show the general doctrine of the Eighth Book of the Eccle-

* Ecclesiastical Polity, book viii. c. iv. 6.

+ Ib. c. iv. 8.

‡ Ib. c. iv. 7.

§ Ib. c. vi. 7, 8.

|| Ib. c. vi. 9.

¶ Ib. c. vi. 11.

** Ib. c. vi. 13.

siastical Polity on the relations between Church and State. And thus much at least is clear: there can be no doubt that it teaches, or rather involves, as a basis and pre-condition of all its particular arguments, the great doctrine that the state is a person, having a conscience, cognisant of matter of religion, and bound by all constitutional and natural means to advance it. It is impossible not to recognise throughout the book a texture of thought such as pre-eminently distinguished the great man whose name it bears. And yet, on the other hand, it contains some statements which lead us to rejoice that he is not responsible for it as it stands in its particular details, and that it does not carry with it the weight of his plenary authority; the authority of that noble and sanctified intellect, to which Pope Clement VIII., according to Walton, paid so just and eloquent a tribute.* “There is no learning that this man hath not searched into, nothing too hard for his understanding. This man indeed deserves the name of an author: his books will get reverence by age, for there is in them such seeds of eternity, that, if the rest be like this (the first), they shall last till the last fire shall consume all learning.” The perfect copies of the three last books were unhappily lost after his death: the rough draughts were given to Dr. Spencer, his friend, and made up by him according to the best of his ability; and he writes of them in very strong terms, that there were left “no-

* Walton's Lives, p. 228.

thing but the old, imperfect, mangled draughts, dismembered into pieces: no favour, no grace, not the shadow of themselves remaining in them.”* And again, “the learned will find in them some shadows and resemblances of their father’s face.”

15. Although the book speaks of the natural separation of the two societies, and so lays a ground for clear reasoning upon their mutual relations, yet in other places it seems to lose sight of the distinction between a society and the mere total of the individuals who may belong to it; and to assume that the people of England composed one society† which bore two different names, rather than two societies accidentally co-extensive as to the persons they comprised. And even this we know was not in strictness true. There were, even under Elizabeth, known members of the state who were not members of the church. Some confusion appears to arise from the want of a clearer line. For example, it is said that canons, although of ecumenical councils, are only the preliminary opinions of wise men upon the subject-matter until they have received the royal assent. Now we may grant that they want the concurrence of the state in order to take effect as a part of the law of the land; but who will doubt that they have some validity *in foro conscientiae*, affecting the members of the church, independently

* Walton’s Lives. App. to Hooker, p. 25.

† “I must be bold enough to say, that I do not think that even Hooker puts the idea of a Church on the true foundation.”—Coleridge, Table Talk, i. 241.

of any civil approbation whatever? Another most important question is raised respecting the derivation of power from the body at large. This maxim fell in with Hooker's purpose, because he was thus enabled to limit the ecclesiastical headship, and show it to be secondary to the body, though superior to individuals. It was quite worth his while to yield something of the general prerogatives of the crown in civil matters, especially at a period when they were so much overstrained, in order at the same time to reduce within moderate limits its ecclesiastical pretensions. Indeed, but for this doctrine, the theory in general would have been as hazardous to the constitution and existence of the church, as it certainly was to the civil liberties of the subject. We need not here examine into the accuracy of the position, as it is not within our scope. It is enough to say, that it fully sustains the principle of union between Church and State, so long as the body which he contemplates is composed mainly of members of the Church, and its conscience, representing the result of the general belief of the people, yields homage to her doctrines.

16. Bishop Warburton, in the 'Alliance of Church and State,'* taught that civil society, being defective in the controul of motives and in the sanction of reward,† had in all ages called in the aid of religion to

* See Postscript to the fourth edition (*Works*, vol. vii. p. 320), where a partial summary is given.

† There is a much nobler and purer statement of the inadequacy of the State, taken alone, to fulfil its purposes, in No. IX. of *Letters to a Member of the Society of Friends*, pp. 50-52, by the Rev. F. Maurice,

supply the want. The State contemplates for its end the body and its interests ; has for its means, coercion ; for its general subject-matter, utility. The Church is a religious society, of distinct origin ; having for its end the salvation of souls ; for its subject-matter, truth ; for its instrument, persuasion ; regulating motives as well as acts ; and promising eternal reward. Though separate, these societies would not interfere, because they have different provinces ; but, the State having needs as above stated, and the Church requiring protection against violence, they had each reasons sufficient to induce a voluntary and free convention.

17. Accordingly, the societies united ; not indeed under any formal engagement with all the stipulated conditions, but like sovereign and people in the original contract. That is, the theory of the alliance accurately represents the true *idea* according to which they ought to unite. And this idea was actually realised by the then existing state of things in England ; where an established church and a free toleration were made perfectly to agree by the medium of a test-law, without which, either dissenters will obtain political power and destroy the church ; or, in the other extreme, the church will persecute dissenters. And the conditions of the union are, that the church receives a free maintenance for the clergy ; a share, for her security, in the legislative body ; and

chaplain of Guy's Hospital, and professor of English literature and history in King's College, London. See also the same author's Lectures on National Education.

a co-active power to be used in her spiritual courts for a purpose which is also a state purpose,—namely, the correction of certain forms of vice. In return for which, she surrenders to the state her original independence,* and subjects all her laws and movements to the necessity of the state's previous approval. If there be more than one such religious society or church, the state is to contract with the largest; to which will naturally belong the greatest share of political influence.

18. Of the great moral defects of this theory, one is that indicated by the concluding sentence. The state is to contract with the largest religious society. The adoption of a national church is then with it matter of calculation, and not of conscience. The state in this view has no conscience. It is not contemplated in the bishop's work as a moral person, having responsibility before God, nor as an aggregation of individuals, each having personal responsibilities, and bound in all things according to their capability to serve God, His church, His truth: therefore under obligation to regard that service as in itself an end of positive value, independently of the resulting

* Unfortunately our language does not supply a term by which to distinguish an important secondary signification of the word independence (*selbständigkeit*) from its etymological sense (*unabhängigkeit*). In the first of these it means independent being, self-sustained and un-derived existence; in the second, independent or uncontrolled operation. It is evidently in the latter sense that Bishop Warburton uses the term. I cannot but think that this indistinctness has had an unfortunate effect in clouding the popular notions and in exasperating controversy.

benefits to society. In addition to this fatal deficiency, the view of the state, as to its aims, is wholly unsatisfactory. It is represented as restricted absolutely to temporal, nay to material, ends ; and is consequently stripped of all its nobler attributes. It is probable, indeed, that the writer, agreeably to the tone of his mind, thus curtailed its functions, rather in order to give clearness to his demarcating line between the church and the state, and precision to the conception of the alliance, than with the view of advancing a proposition philosophically true. But it is a very low theory of government which teaches, that it has only the care of the body and bodily goods ; and might almost seem to imply, that all physicians are more peculiarly statesmen. There was far more truth in the $\varepsilon \delta \zeta \eta \nu^*$ of Aristotle ; under which we may consider that the state, bound to promote more generally the good of man, finds the church ready made to its hand, as the appointed instrument for advancing that department of human well-being which is spiritual, and contracts with it accordingly.

19. The greatest intellectual defect appears to be (besides its inadequate measure of the comparative social power of religious communities) the absolute and rigid form of its propositions in indeterminate subject-matter. The writer argues for his scheme of the support of an establishment, with full toleration of dissent and the maintenance of an exclusive test, as though it were the single and mathematically neces-

* Arist. Pol. iii. 5.

sary result of all general arguments from the nature of the state and of the church; whereas his is, in fact, only one particular mode of constructing the social equation, adapted perhaps to one particular stage of the progression of religious freedom, but not distinguished by any inherent properties of truth from other modes which may be equally suitable to the preceding or the following stages. The basis therefore of the work is narrow, and its applicability and use proportionably restricted.

20. And there does appear to be something reasonable in the objection which was urged by Paley* against the representation of the alliance in the light of a fact, on the ground that it is a fiction. But, says Warburton, it is no more a fiction than the celebrated original compact. Nor is it: but both are fictitious: and Bolingbroke also censures the teachers of the original compact for having represented men as if they had at some time anterior to civil society been independent, when it is notoriously untrue; and this untruth is made the basis of other and greater untruths concerning the derivation of power from the people, and the consequent denial of a divine authority in government. In fact, Warburton appears to have adopted the views of Locke, and to have copied his representation of the alliance from the original compact, not himself objecting to the use that has been made† of that arbitrary mode of stating the

* Mor. Phil., book vi. ch. iii.

† Postscript to the Fourth Edition.

case, but, on the contrary, considering any derivation of political from patriarchal rule as an absurdity.

21. Dr. Paley* has supplied us with a view of religious establishments, distinguished by his own great and highly characteristic merits, but likewise impaired } by the original vice of his false ethical principles, and } by the total absence of any substantive conception of the visible church. According to this author, the rights, offices, order, family, and succession of the priesthood, were parts of the Jewish religion, as well as the means of transmitting it. But no form of outward institution enters into the composition of Christianity. "The authority, therefore, of a church establishment is founded upon its utility:" and the end is "the preservation and communication of religious knowledge." Regard to political ends has only served to deteriorate the church wherever it has been allowed. Three things, accordingly, are requisite:—

1. A clergy, or order of men set apart for religion.
2. A legal provision for their maintenance.
3. The restriction of that provision to the ministers of a particular sect.

22. He contends for the necessity of a clergy "to perpetuate the evidences of Revelation, and to interpret the obscurity of those ancient writings in which the religion is contained;" and to conduct public worship with decency. From these peculiar occupations he deduces the necessity of a separate maintenance. Voluntary contribution would yield but an

* Moral and Political Philosophy, book vi. ch. x.

insufficient supply, and would lower the tone of instruction. As to the third condition, the form of religion ought to be such as to comprehend all existing differences of opinion; but if the prevailing opinions be “not only so various, but so contradictory,” as to render their junction impossible; then, where patronage is allowed, and one set of people appoint the teachers whom another set are to hear, there must be a test—the simplest possible—to secure some unity of proceeding. Such test, therefore, “may be considered merely as a restriction upon the exercise of private patronage.” Again, if the parishioners chose their ministers without a test, intolerable dis cords would arise. The recognition of all sects appears scarcely compatible with that which is the “first requisite in a national establishment—the division of the country into parishes of a commodious extent.” One sect, therefore, should be preferred. But tests ensnare consciences, often come to “contradict the actual opinions of the church, whose doctrines they profess to contain,” and proscribe tenets long after they have ceased to be dangerous. Any form of Christianity is better than none, as all tend to good. This justifies the magistrate’s interference; which therefore carries no violation of religious liberty while he is only “providing means of public instruction.” But where his faith differs from that of the majority, he should establish the latter, as the chances of truth are equal. Toleration promotes truth; but exclusion may perhaps be defended where disaffection happens

to be connected with certain religious distinctions. Generally there is no reason why these should prevent men from discharging civil functions together, more than differences of opinion on questions of "natural philosophy, history, or ethics."

23. The views here given of the office of the clergy, of the visible church, of creeds, of the method of weighing different forms of Christianity, and of the irrelevancy of religious distinctions to the discharge of civil duties, are full of the seeds of evil. The truths which the author seems to have perceived with clearness were, the national benefits of a recognition of religion; the futility of the allegation that the civil magistrate is not competent to its advancement, or not justified in "providing means" for that end; the compatibility of an establishment for religion with religious liberty; the need of a provision for preserving as well as diffusing the truth; and the tendency of the voluntary method of support to deteriorate the quality of pastoral instruction.

24. Mr. Burke, among the varied treasures of his Thoughts on the French Revolution, has given us, not indeed a theory, but much more, such a living picture as might rival the fabled works of Daedalus, of the principle of national religion. According to him, the state is "a partnership* in all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection." The bond of each particular state is but one link in the great primeval chain which

* p. 183.

holds all physical and all moral natures each in its appointed place. All things, says he, should be done in their proper relations, and the acts of the state must fulfil the duties of that relation which, from the scope and nature of its organisation, it bears to God. Hence the English nation “think themselves bound,* not only as individuals in the sanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that personal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and cast; but also in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the institutor, and author, and protector of civil society.” He that willed our nature to be perfected by virtue, willed the state as a condition of that perfection, and connected it with the source and archetype of all perfection. To impress governors with a strong and awful idea that they act in trust;† to strengthen and complete the insufficient control of shame;‡ to give fixity to the national institutions by environing them with the associations of reverence; to provide for the preaching of the gospel to the poor;§ and to counterbalance the temptations as well as to minister to the human misfortunes of the rich, the people of England will have their church “mixed throughout the whole mass of life:” they do not regard it as a thing heterogeneous, accidental, or added for accommodation. “Church and state are ideas inseparable in their minds, and scarcely is the one ever mentioned without mentioning the other.”||

25. The argument of Mr. Coleridge “on the Con-

* p. 185. † p. 175. ‡ p. 177. § pp. 191, 192. || p. 187.

stitution of the Church and State according to the Idea of each" is alike beautiful and profound. He shows, from an analysis of the parts of the body politic, that, in order to its well-being, there must necessarily enter into its composition an estate, whose office it shall be to supply those governing and harmonising qualities of character,* without which the remaining elements cannot advantageously cohere.† His first estate is that of the landowners, or possessors of fixed property, barons and franklins—providing for the permanency of the nation. His second, that of the merchants, manufacturers, artisans, "the distributive class," whose especial office it is to secure the progressiveness of the nation, and personal freedom, its condition. In the king, again, "the cohesion by interdependence and the unity of the country were established." But these, viewed alone, are as it were but the material means for attaining their several ends.

26. There must be a soul, underlying and animating them all, a cultivation of the inward man, which is the root, the corrective, and the safeguard of civilisation. The nourishment of this paramount ingredient of national life constitutes the function of a third great estate: living on reserved property for more free devotion to its duties, and divided into two classes; a smaller number dwelling at the fountain-heads of knowledge,

* Compare Mr. Emerson's Dartmouth College Oration, p. 26. Boston, U. S., 1838.

† Church and State, p. 42. A masterly analysis of this work will be found prefixed to the small volume in which it has recently been republished, together with the Lay Sermons, by Mr. H. N. Coleridge.

guarding the treasures already acquired, opening new shafts and mines, and dispensing* their acquisitions to their brethren ; the second division of this estate, a far larger number distributed throughout the country, supplying for every spot a resident guide and teacher ; and thus connecting each part of time and each part of the nation with the rest respectively. Such is the natural "clerisy" of a State. Upon such a theory, drawn according to human principles, supervenes what Mr. Coleridge has felicitously termed the (in reference to this theory) "happy accident" of the Christian Church,† "the sustaining, correcting, befriending opposite of the world, the compensating counterforce to the inherent and inevitable defects of the State as a State ;" not primarily to any particular State, inasmuch as the whole world is her inheritance, but yet with applicability, by subdivision into branches, to each particular State.

27. The ministers of a national Church are, according to Mr. Coleridge, created by the nation "trustees of a reserved national fund." We should, however, notice that, whatever may be the case in Scotland, in England that which the Church enjoys was not set apart by national appropriation as a provision for improvement, or for an establishment indefinitely ; but was conferred upon herself as an actual institution, given to the object indeed of national cultivation, yet exclusively in that its highest form, in which it depends

* "Che di su prendono, e di sotto fanno."—Dante, *Paradiso*, ii. 123.

† *Church and State*, p. 133.

upon her. A recent writer avails himself of Coleridge's phrase, and says his theory involves "the appropriation of a part of *the national property* for the support and propagation" of a system "from which large masses of the community by which that property is furnished conscientiously dissent."* What the nation, however, has given to the Church, is no longer national property in an ordinary sense; much less then is what individuals gave.

28. The first remark I would make on this theory is, that, in its view of the State, it does not specifically include the element of its living personality and consciousness; it regards the State as a thing composed and guided, rather than as self-composing and self-guiding, and deliberatively free in the exercise of its functions. I do not notice this as a fault, but merely as a characteristic. The work does not profess to aim at scientific entireness. As its gifted author states, "the scheme or diagram best suited to make the idea clearly understood, may be very different from the form in which it is or may be most adequately realised."† But it is far from forbidding the addition of the idea of moral freedom and conscience in the State; on the contrary, it prepares for, and I would indeed say requires, this idea. More we need not ask or have.

29. It may be well further to observe, with reference to the analysis of the two first estates, that its classification is true on a large scale, not in minute de-

* Wardlaw's Lectures on National Establishments, lecture i. p. 28.

+ Church and State, Advertisement.

tail : it is the delineation of a painter, not of an anatomist ; and yet the painter has regard to anatomy, but he generalises its results. The landed estate is not entirely permanent; it is also productive and progressive; but, on the whole, the habits of mind and action which belong to it are indisposed to change. It more evidently depends on super-human power, and generates less of self-reliance, with greater stability. The trading class has a facility of motion and of transition, a power of rapid creation, a fertility of resource, an acuteness produced by constant friction and rivalry of interests, a tendency to reduce all social relations to the form of money as the most convenient and determinate medium of exchange ; with more of the spirit of self-reliance, it is therefore more inclined to form judgments, and to review and reverse what has been judged already, and it is also much more ready and apt in giving effect to its desires. Thus it is better able to sway, but less suited to sustain, the State. There are, however, some important counteracting influences, such as the necessity of order and tranquillity to the prosperity of trade, and to the regular action of the labour-market ; and the disposition of those who have acquired property to pass into the class of landholders, and thus to refresh and invigorate the more permanent and stable interest. But these explanations in no way detract from the substantial truth of Mr. Coleridge's definition ; and I do not venture any further to incumber the masterly sketch which he has drawn.

30. The profuse and brilliant eloquence of Dr. Chal-

mers, and the warm heart from which its colouring is principally derived, have necessarily contributed to render the scientific form of his conclusions less accurately discernible than it would have been had he written more apathetically. His lectures on Church establishments teach that Christianity is the sure foundation of order and prosperity; that the efforts of individuals, without aid from government, are insufficient to bring it within reach of the whole population; that the territorial division of the land into manageable districts, with a general cure of souls over all persons within each, is the most efficient method of giving to Christianity an universal influence: that such division cannot well be carried into effect but by a Church of one given denomination. Again, with respect to the religious tenets within which a government may choose its national establishment, he contends that the Church should be wholly independent in respect of its theology*—that there should be “maintenance from the one quarter, and an unfettered theology from the other:”—but he subsequently, in effect, qualifies this doctrine.

31. He teaches that the government should determine what shall be its establishment, if possible, simply by the answer to the question, “What is truth?” but if not, then with a modified view to the benefit of the population at large.† He considers a state incompetent to enter upon the details of theological discussion, but abundantly qualified to decide upon certain broad and

* Lecture ii. p. 37.

† Lecture iv. p. 115.

leading principles. Upon the former consideration he holds them justified in selecting, or in adhering to the selection of, any one of the Christian denominations, which, being Protestant, are also evangelical ; as, for example, Methodist, Independent, Baptist : he does not, however, supply any precise test for determining to what extent the epithet “evangelical” may be applicable. But, upon the latter consideration, he teaches that the State is competent, nay, that any man,* “with the ordinary schooling of a gentleman,” and “by the reading of a few weeks,” may qualify himself to decide upon the broad question which separates Protestantism from Popery, namely, whether the Scriptures be or be not the only rule of faith and practice in religion.

32. It did not enter into the purpose of Dr. Chalmers to exhibit the whole subject ; but even in these propositions he has, it may be apprehended, put forward much questionable matter. He appears by no means to succeed in showing, upon his own principles, that his territorial establishment must be of one denomination : he would probably find it impossible, upon stricter investigation, so to define Evangelical Protestantism as to make it a universal criterion for the guidance of governments : it might further be argued, that he has surrendered the condition without which all others fail, in omitting from his calculation the divine constitution of the visible Church ; and that, while he does not so much as inquire whether on the

• Lecture iv. p. 119.

one side it would be easy or the reverse to reject the unevangelical Protestants, he has on the other very greatly underrated the difficulty of the questions at issue between the Church of Rome and her opponents. But no more : it is painful even to indicate points of difference from a most distinguished and excellent man, who has done his subject and his country permanent service by his lucid and powerful explanations of the machinery of a religious establishment.

33. The reader will probably agree that it is unnecessary, with a view to the practical purposes before us, to enter upon any detailed investigation of two other theories of the connection between Church and State, which embody the respective extremes of opinion adopted on the one hand by Hobbes, and on the other by Bellarmino and ultramontane Romanists. They are theories of derivation rather than of connection, properly so called. According to the first, the Church and her religion are mere creatures of the State. According to the second, the temporal power is wholly dependent and subordinate. These views are not avowed amongst ourselves. A third extreme opinion of a different kind, namely, that the magistrate has no concern with religion, is that against which the general argument of the succeeding chapters is directed. It is observed by a German author that the first of these schemes has been the peculiar danger of Lutheranism, the second of Romanism, and the third of Calvinism.*

34. Several other writers have touched collaterally

* Stahl's Kirchenverfassung, Anhang i.

on the subject, of whom the following are most familiar. Machiavelli treats of religion as an instrument of government, and holds it needful beyond everything else to be in the care of states.* Lord Clarendon's treatise, entitled 'Religion and Policy,' is historical. He considers that the verse of Isaiah (xlix. 23) sufficiently proves the "sovereign care, protection, and propagation of religion to be committed to Christian princes;" and proceeds to investigate the origin and progress of the papal supremacy, which, as he argues, had been the great obstacle to the full discharge of this obligation. Justice Blackstone writes briefly but rationally upon this topic as on others. His propositions are—1. That the State ought not to punish the sin of schism as such; 2. That it should protect the Church; 3. That if this can be better effected by the imposition of tests, it is not precluded from using them, since the disposal of offices is matter of favour and discretion.† The object of Montesquieu, in his work on the genius of laws, is much more to exhibit the actual than to embody the ideal: *De présenter ce qui est, ce qui fût, et non ce qui aurait dû être,*‡ according to his Parisian editors of 1796. He seems, however, to assume as axiomatic the doctrine of a national religion, and treats of its relations to many of the forms of life.§ He belonged to a school not in harmony with the spirit of the Church of Rome, but he enunciates his general opinion in these terms: *Ce ne fût ni*

* Discorsi, i. 11, 12.

+ Commentaries, iv. 52.

‡ Œuvres, Paris, 1796, Avertissement.

§ Esprit des Loix, lib. xxiv—xxvi.

*la crainte, ni la piété, qui établit la religion chez les Romains ; mais la nécessité où sont toutes les sociétés d'en avoir une.** Neal,† the historian of the Puritans, bears witness that a state may give sufficient encouragement to a national religion, without invading the liberties of dissidents.‡

* Sur la Politique des Romains dans la Religion.

† Vol. iv. Preface.

‡ The following are among the recent productions which touch upon the relations of the Church and the State:—

Vinet's Mémoire en faveur de la Liberté des Cultes. Paris, 1826.

Armstrong's Civil Establishment of the Church Indefensible. London, 1831. And Abuse of Power in the State. 1833.

Smith's Letters on National Religion. London, 1833.

Inglis's Vindication of Church Establishments. Edinburgh, 1833.

Brown on Church Establishments. Glasgow, 1833.

Lorimer's Condition of Religion in the United States. Glasgow 1833.

Esdaile's Connection of Civil and Religious Institutions. Perth, 1833.

Sewell's Letters to a Dissenter. Oxford, 1834.

Essays on the Church, by a Layman. London, 1834.

De Tocqueville's Démocratie en Amérique, Vol. II. ch. ix. Paris, 1835.

Visit to the American Churches. London, 1836.

Rothe's Anfänge der Christichen Kirche, B. I. Wittemberg, 1837.

La Mennais, Les Affaires de Rome, in the Chapters on 'Les Maux de l'Eglise et de la Société. Paris, 1838.

Maurice, on the Kingdom of Christ, Vol. III. London, 1838.

Wardlaw's Lectures. London, 1839.

Angus's Voluntary System. London, 1839.

Swaine's Shield of Dissent. London, 1839.

Macneile's Lectures. London, 1840.

Stahl's Kirchenverfassung, Anhang II. Erlangen, 1840.

Hutchinson's Reasons for Conservatism. London, 1840.

CHAPTER II.

THE THEORY OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

PART I.

THE DUTY OF THE STATE IN RESPECT TO RELIGION.

1. The maxim, phrase, or cry of "Church and State," so familiar to our ears and mouths, has been adopted in the present day, as one of its leading symbols, by a great political combination, which is unjustly treated when it is denominated a party, because it is entrenched in a broader and more comprehensive position than any party, properly so called, can occupy; because it is composed of men belonging to many once separate parties, who have now come into cordial union, not (of necessity) through any change in their original and peculiar opinions, but in consequence of having fallen back with the movement of events upon those larger and deeper principles which formerly, as now, they held in common.

2. The notions, however, which are attached by each man, or class of men, to this celebrated and effective watchword, are various and fluctuating. In the minds of some it may represent what is no better than one among the thousand forms of egoism and

intolerance—an impression that some opinion must, according to the law of this world's course, preponderate over all others in influence and distinction, and a selfish eagerness that, among competing claims essentially equal in authority, our neighbour's rather than our own should be in relative depression. Others again will befriend the connection of Church and State for the same reason which would, in different circumstances, have induced them to discourage it; simply, that is to say, as an existing connection, the sheer acquiescence in which, for no other reason than that it does exist, flatters and indulges the indolence of our nature. With a larger and a higher class than either of those which have been named, the phrase is the index of some hereditary or personal attachment, laudable in itself, valuable in its results, yet falling very far short of its real signification.

3. But underneath and beside all these faulty, or at best deficient conceptions, there is much of that instinctive attraction towards truth which has often saved men from themselves: an unconscious bias, the merciful though unappreciated gift of God, not to be despised nor lightly esteemed by any one who studies in practical philosophy, inasmuch as every such person must be well aware that it is futile, that it is insane, to refuse the aid of right conclusions merely because they have not been formed on right premises, or because they have been reached and entertained without any distinct intellectual analysis of their grounds. Thankfully, however, accepting all assent, and employing all

concurrence, the man who is in earnest will desire on this as on all subjects to aim at bringing the understandings of his fellow-men into harmonious co-operation with their instincts and affections; and now, with an earnestness proportioned to the stress of the period, to the intricacy of the subject, and to the magnitude of the interests involved in it, should we endeavour to apprehend the great idea of fixed and active relation between the Church and the State—of association between the supreme organisation of earthly power, and the supreme organisation of spiritual authority. It is not a matter of narrow compass, obvious to the eye upon a superficial view, but a deep fundamental truth of human society, and therefore of the nature in whose capacities and necessities that society is grounded; prolific of results, alike affecting public institutions and individual character, together with the destinies that are ordained to depend upon them.

4. Let us proceed to consider of the various modes, in which this extended and difficult question may be treated.

It appears, then, to me, that there are four principal modes in which our subject may be investigated—to omit in this place any notice of minor and incidental arguments.

The first, directly; by inquiring for positive precept, or direct example equivalent to precept, from Scripture.

The second, ethically; by the analytical examination of the nature of a state, and the deduction there-

from of its purposes and conditions of action so far as they respect religion.

The third, consequentially ; by showing the necessity of religion for the fulfilment both of the higher and of the lower, which last are also the primary and universally acknowledged ends of a state.

The fourth, inductively ; by tracing through history the actual forms or images of civil and of spiritual power, and thus indicating both a primeval authority, and the universal consent of mankind in favour of their combination together for the fulfilment of their joint and several designs.

5. The first of these represents specifically the voice of immediate command, represented by the symbol shall.

The second the voice of design, or of God speaking through his works : even as by the sun and the rain, and “by the things that are made,”* He is pleased to teach us His “ invisible things ;” “ His eternal power and Godhead,” and the duties that flow from them ; so by the very nature of a man, or of a society of men, which is likewise His creature, does He instruct us to discover their several laws of being, assigned to them by the creative Mind. By this kind of investigation are we shown what ought to be—that is to say, duty is laid before us, not as simple will or command, but with some insight into its orderly growth out of the nature of things.

The third mode of inquiry represents the voice of

* Rom. i. 20.

penal admonition, whereby when our higher sensibilities are blunted, the seat of feeling is reached through the medium of the lower; and from consequences, palpable to the grossest discernment at least when they have arisen, men learn that that which ought to be, likewise must be, or torment is the result; that the command will take effect, that the right will sooner or later clothe itself with power.

Vuolsi così colà, dove si puote
Ciò che si vuole.*

The fourth, or experimental mode, apprises us of what has been; and in proportion as historical evidence enables us either to trace up the substance of any institution to a strictly primeval ordinance, or to show universality of prevalence, or to prove that the amount of its reception has varied in different times and countries, directly as the nobler influences of human nature; in such proportion does it approximate to the establishment of a general law obligatory upon us all. This is the kind of induction proper to moral sciences.

6. Upon the whole these methods very much correspond with the main directors of moral action, whose titles respectively are—it is written; it is natural; it is expedient; it is customary. All may aid together in leading us up to the fountain of all duty, the will of God. The first, as giving us His own utterance. The second, as reading in actual nature the will of its Author. The third, as a formula verifying these; since all things which are obligatory are also

* Dante, Inferno, canto iii. 95.

conducive to well-being. The fourth, as indicating to us in Nature active (so to speak) that which the second elicited from Nature at rest.

7. It is not a repetition of the arguments of Bishop Warburton, and others akin to them, that is here intended, or a mere exhibition, in any form, of the uses of this connection. These topics have been more conformable to the modes of thought prevalent in some former generations, and less palpably inadequate to their need. Protection received on the one hand, and obedience inculcated on the other, are facts in themselves which I certainly am not about to deny, and they undoubtedly manifest an interchange of benefits, such as should tend to support the credit of the alliance itself. But in our period its uses are questioned and denied, and it is necessary that we fall back upon the examination of its rights. No theory upon a subject essentially ethical, which has reference to results alone, will be found sufficient in the day of trouble. Such a mode of reasoning is made for seasons of calm weather, and will not abide those tempests of our social existence in which men are driven, as by an instinct anticipating necessity, to anchor themselves upon principles of breadth and of solidity, and can find no adequate support in the pithless argumentation which we too often allow to monopolise the character of what is prudent and practical.* It may be that the same proposition is applicable to theories founded

* Coleridge, Statesman's Manual: "It seems a paradox only to the unthinking," &c.—Note to Lay Sermon on Ps. lxxviii, 5—7.

upon causes alone. It seems, then, that the all-wise God has given us evidence enough to support our convictions, but not too much; a strength according to our need, but not beyond it. Had questions of the deepest interest been so palpably and undeniably plain as to need no extrinsic support, faith could not have been tried; while, had those extrinsic props been wanting, it could not have survived the trial. We cannot then afford to dispense with any class of confirmatory arguments and evidence tending to uphold our practical principles; but we must travel both backwards into the region of causes, and forwards into the region of results, in order to do them and our own consciences full justice in the time of need.

8. I will however state more distinctly the reasons which have induced me principally to follow the second of the modes of investigation which have been indicated above, or, the ethical argument.

And first, as comparing it with the argument from Scripture. The exposition of the latter belongs most properly to the profession of theology. Further, as the form of Scripture was adapted all along to the circumstances of its delivery, and as the Scriptures of the New Testament were written at a time when there was no case of a nation of persons professedly Christian, such as is essentially required by the present argument, it follows, that we are thrown back on the indirect modes of scriptural teaching; on inferences from the history of the Hebrew commonwealth, confessedly distinguished as it is in many points of importance from

any in modern times; and on the interpretation of type and prophecy. The latter seem to require a light for access to them, before we can display in the face of men that which they themselves emit.* And as

* I cite the following development of the practical bearing of certain texts in the prophecies of the Old Testament on the modern question of connection between the Church and the State, from an article in the 'British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review,' for the month of September, 1839, pp. 373-375:—“ Some perhaps will think it strange to be referred thus to the Old Testament, and to a single text there, for an evangelical law of such great practical import. But they may consider that, since it was not intended that the Church should, at her first beginning, enter into relations with any State—since that whole order of things was to be but a later development of something in her original constitution—any rules expressly concerning it could only be prophetic, and the natural place to look for them would be in those portions of the prophetic Scriptures which the Church, from the beginning, knew to have reference to her own later times. Nor would it be hard to find other usages and rules on which the same remark might be made, viz., that they are developments of something in the original system, for which at first there was no occasion, and accordingly that for the scriptural sanctions of them we have to look in the prophetical and typical Scriptures rather than in the New Testament itself. Such, for example, is the penitential discipline of the Church: her earlier and purer times had comparatively little occasion for it; and when it became settled, it was in great measure the development of precedents and hints from the Jewish history, and the lessons of mortification and penitence in the Psalms and Prophets. Such again is the splendour of churches and church ornaments: the days of our first poverty of course knew it not, but when it came it found its warrant in the records of Moses, David, and Solomon. No prejudice, therefore, need lie against a similar mode of deducing the obligation of the State to establish the Church.

“ If any one ask, of what particular article or fundamental rule of God’s kingdom this theory of Church and State is a development, we should answer, of the Holy Catholic Church: *i. e.*, of the continued presence and manifestation of Jesus Christ in the world, through the medium of that society which is called His mystical body. The Church is the spouse of Christ, and the mother of His family; and these passages of Isaiah declare what is the especial office of kings and queens in that family; how they in particular stand related to the Church. They are to be her nursing fathers and mothers: *i. e.*, as Leslie has

respects the former, namely, the Jewish precedent, it is only by considering what nationality is and imports, that we can be in a position to judge accurately how far that case is peculiar; or how far a real analogy

explained at large (and to him we must refer for a thorough and most satisfactory elucidation of the passages), they are among her servants and attendants, trusted by Almighty God with the nourishment of her children, with the training of them, and bearing them safe in their arms. The phrase has acquired a trite and almost a proverbial use, in a very different sense, as though the Church were a helpless infant in the arms of some Defender of the Faith; but the context puts the true force of the image out of question. ‘Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.’—Isaiah, xlix. 22, 23. Again, in ch. lx. 4, ‘Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters *shall be nursed at thy side*.’ If in another verse we find, ‘Thou shalt *suck the milk* of the Gentiles, and thou *shalt suck the breast of kings*;’ this cannot be so pressed as to denote childish dependence and obedience, since in the very same prophecy, as well as in the former one, apparently parallel to it, the expressions of humiliation, nay subjection to the Church, on the part of the potentates of the earth, are so very full and unequivocal. ‘The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and *their kings shall minister unto thee*.’ ‘Thy gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that *their kings may be brought*. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish: yea those nations shall be utterly wasted.’ These words throw light on one of the distinctive titles given to Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse: ‘Prince of the Kings of the Earth.’ They point out in what sense the *kingdoms of this world* were to become the *kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ*; and how ‘the kings of this world’ were to ‘bring their honour and glory into the Holy Jerusalem.’ And that all this was not so much a prediction as a promulgation of God’s will on the subject, is proved unquestionably by the fearful sanction annexed: perishing and utter wasting to the nation and kingdom that will not serve Zion.

“Thus are kings and governors representatives of Jesus Christ, in

prevails, and, consequently, to what extent the authority of Scripture will apply. But after such consideration, we may find ourselves the more able both to set aside what was temporary and specific in the theocratic dispensation, and to retain and press the claim from the Israelitish history for the principle of national religion ; as well as to establish that sense of the prophecies which it is so easy for an opponent, as long as no literal precept can be cited, nor any collateral light introduced, to dispute.

And that argument which I have termed ethical must of course, to be valid, be itself agreeable to the principles of Scripture, though it includes their application to a distinct subject-matter. There is however a further object in resorting, firstly, to an argument distinct from that of Divine Revelation : it is to show that by the light of nature God had already, when

His protecting particular Providence, whereby He educates those who shall be heirs of salvation : that Providence of which Moses, who 'was king in Jeshurun,' was a type, when he had to bear God's people 'as a nursing father beareth a sucking child,' which he describes in its application to the whole people, where he says, 'The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.' And in its application to Benjamin individually (*i. e.*, to the energetic self-renouncing champions of the Church, such as St. Paul, of whom Benjamin was the appointed image), in the last clause of that highly descriptive verse, 'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by (literally, *upon*) Him, and the Lord shall cover, wrap him up in His garment, and he shall dwell between His shoulders.' There cannot be an exacter—if it were uninspired we should add a sweeter and more engaging—description of a foster-father bearing a young child ; and this, we have reason to believe, is the appropriate scriptural image—the sacramental sign, as antiquity would have esteemed it—of the care due from kings and governors to the children of the Church. (Deut. xxxiii. 5; Num. xi. 12; Deut. xxxiii. 27, 12.)'

revelation was unknown, imparted sufficiently the grounds and proofs of the principle of public religion, together with those of other elementary truths and duties; which if we reject under this double confirmation, we do it with enhanced guilt.

9. Secondly. As respects the argument from consequences, it has received I think its full proportion of attention: it is no less liable to indefinite prolongations through the spirit of controversy than any other course of reasoning; and the discussion upon it, if exclusively pursued, has a tendency to lower that moral tone with which the mind should engage itself in the pursuit of truth.

10. On the other hand, the conclusion from history is allowed to be in our favour; but an appeal is entered to a different tribunal. It is imagined that for the present age has been reserved the discovery of a grand and determining moral principle, the duty of separating the Church from the State; and that, having exploded the axioms of former times, we must no longer argue from their practice. I desire then to test this great discovery, and to afford some aid towards conjecturing its final results, by looking for those manifestations of the will of God, which are afforded by the structure of His creatures; and by showing that, until we can radically change and invert the very nature of political society, we cannot, except with fearful guilt and hazard, consent to its divorce from the consecrating principle of national religion.

11. If government be in its substance a divine ordi-

nance ; if the testimony of primeval records, repeated in the individual history of every one among us, bear witness to the fact that our social relations do not derive their origin from the private, or even from the general will ; then I submit that the most authentic, the most conclusive, the most philosophical, and, in the absence of literal and undisputed precept from Scripture, also the most direct method of handling this important investigation, is that which examines the moral character and capacities of nations and of rulers, and thus founds the whole idea of their duty upon that will which gave them their existence.

And indeed this province is one almost untrodden. We have not given free scope to the resources of the ethical argument. Undoubtedly it lies in a region of abstraction to which the temper of the age, and the prevailing pursuits of this country, are averse. Yet, though the sphere be narrow, contemplative investigations are not wholly disused among us, nor are they likely so far to fail as that there shall not be left space and ample reward for every man that brings his gift, though mean, to the altar of truth; the seed he sows in weakness may find entrance into minds whence it may again and again become prolific.

12. In attempting then to investigate, by such a course of argument, the truths indicated by the popular symbol already cited, I shall commence by considering what place association in general occupies with reference to our moral being, what is its proper work in the Divine organisation of the universe, what addi-

tional necessities it superinduces, and what moral guarantees it requires: in what degrees these securities are demanded by, and applicable to, the several descriptions of human combination: whether, among these, what we term the nation, and what we term the State, eminently demand the guarantee of religion, in respect both of capacity and of necessity: by what law or criterion the nation or State must supply itself with this requisite to its well-being: by what form of religion this guarantee is most legitimately and most effectually provided. By these steps we shall find ourselves led up to the conclusion, never more succinctly, popularly, or forcibly embodied, than in the peculiarly English watchword “Church and State;” the union of a Christian government with the Catholic organ of Christianity.

13. The universe everywhere bears testimony to oneness of life and action, to absolute and invariable dependence on a centre, as the characteristic and the law of its nature, and therefore also the condition of its well-being. The Grecian tongue spoke with an unbiassed simplicity in giving it the name of *κόσμος*, or essential order: arrangement everywhere referred to a single and pervading law. Plato has delivered, in the noblest manner, the conception of that fellowship which sustains the universe and controls the tendencies to disorder. Φασὶ δὲ οἱ σόφοι, ὃ Καλλικλεῖς, καὶ οὐρανον, καὶ γῆν, καὶ Θεοὺς, καὶ ἀνθράπους, τὴν ποιησίαν ἔχειν, καὶ φιλίαν, καὶ κοσμότητα, καὶ σωφροσύνην, καὶ δικαιότητα· καὶ τὸ δλον τοῦτο διὰ ταῦτα

*κόσμον καλοῦσσιν.** The Latins retained in their language, and have conveyed into ours, the fundamental notion of *τὸ πᾶν*, of a fixed point and a revolving system, the *universum*.† The idea is that expressed in the fine lines of Virgil :—

Cœlum ac terras, camposque liquentes
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titanaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.‡

The physical confirmation of our solar system attests the veracity of this designation. And the moral structure, as dimly traced in tradition, or conjectured by philosophy, or as fully revealed by the Holy Scriptures, agrees with these independent witnesses. It was because this idea of oneness of life and of a paramount sovereignty in the world had a ground in our human consciousness, that some have evaded the truth by that perversion, which absorbs the whole system into the centre, and deifies every particle of matter. It was, perhaps, on the same account, that the schemes of polytheism, however inconsistent and defaced, have ever retained the notion of some kind of supremacy or superiority in some one of their idols. From this cardinal idea of unity, as the fundamental law of beauty] and of well-being to creation, let us commence.

14. It needs not to travel back into the region of deeper mystery ; the history of our own race affords matter sufficient for our instruction. The origin of

* Plat. Gorg. i. 137 (p. 507, Steph.).

† Cic. de Nat. Deor. i. 43. He usually employs the term *universitas*.

‡ AEn. vi. 724.

evil in this world of ours was the infraction of the established rule of reference to a supreme and single will. Our first parents were not content to derive from a source that lay out of themselves the ultimate ground and reason, and the definitive criterion of their acts : they would seek for themselves another image of good : they would entertain it in the mind under a different conception : they would be the judges of its nature, and would not have God to be the judge for them. One act disorganised the earth and all its moral destinies. It constituted as many new centres, as many rebellious and divided systems of action, as there should be human beings ; atomic centres of limited and petty influence, but without subordination to Him from whom they had derived even the power to rise in revolt against Him. Nay, even more. So long as man was obedient to God, the whole being of man was obedient to his controlling faculties ; but when he ceased to be the servant of his Lord, he ceased also to be the master of himself.* Nor has he ever regained, nor can he recover, that self-mastery, that inward consent and harmony of all his faculties in purpose and in action, which is essential to his peace, until he has once again received and enthroned over his whole heart, to reign there without reserve, the Divine will so madly repudiated.

15. The actual law of human conduct, then, before the fall, was out of man himself, and was in God. The actual law of human conduct after the fall was in

* S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, xiii. 13.

man himself, and was out of God. He had a sense of right and wrong; but he did not ground it on the Divine command. He had a faculty of love; but he would not take account of the continual beneficence of the Almighty, and he spent that faculty upon such inferior objects as he chose. He was susceptible of the sentiments of gratitude and admiration; but he would neither admire the most worthy, nor return thanks to the most bountiful. And all this because he regulated these principles by a reference to himself as supreme arbiter, instead of a reference to a rule out of himself. He had been ordained to walk as an infant by the hand of a nurse; and refusing that aid he could only fall. That which we are specially to observe is, it was not that he thought “I will repudiate the good and worship the evil;” it was not even that he thought, “I will abandon the good to follow the pleasurable;” it was the form and criterion, not the matter of conduct, that he appeared to himself to change; the language of his action was, “I will do that which seemeth good to myself, instead of that which seemeth good to God;” or, “I will require of God that that which He enjoins upon my practice should submit and approve itself to my understanding.”

16. Thus, therefore, in the midst of God’s fair creation, was there planted, wherever there stood a man, a perpetually prolific principle of derangement; of separate, self-centred action, spent ineffectually upon objects that did not enter into the design of the universe, nor contribute, unless by opposition and revulsion, to

the fulfilment of its appointed work. The consequences of this rebellion, had they been uncontroled, must have been, as it would seem, the continual growth of that self-worship which was established at the fall, until at length every vestige of truth and love had been destroyed, and earth had fully reached to the riper wickedness of hell.

17. While, however, it pleased the mercy of God to design a provision for the redemption of mankind by His Son, to be accomplished when the fulness of time should have come; so He likewise ordained certain conditions of the human existence, which, as intermediate expedients, and instruments of a secondary discipline, should both check the progress of selfishness, so far, at least, as to prevent the disease from arriving at its crisis, by establishing a counteracting principle, and should likewise prepare men to recognise the higher truths taught in Divine revelation, and supply them with real though partial approximations to the true law of their being.

18. These were various in shape, but their pervading character was the same; it was that of a *κοινωνία*, a common life: a common life in the family, in the tribe, in the nation, and in each of the relations which each of these contain, was, apart from direct manifestations of the Divine will, the grand counteractor of the disorganising agency of the law of self-worship, and prevented it (as it seems) from realising all those extremes to which it naturally tended. Even to the brute creation was extended a softening influence by

means of this principle of intercommunity. But to mankind it was invaluable. The records of ancient history too plainly testify, that the ordinary and habitual relation of man to man, when independent of any form of positive affinity or fellowship, was one of hostility. The charities of life ranged within the limits which were thus described ; the rights of hospitality might, indeed, create reciprocal obligations between individuals who were personally strange to one another ; but they always had reference to community of race or of nation, or to some specific acts, as their basis ; to one or other of those forms of common life, which I have designated.

19. What can be more instructive to this effect than the sense of neighbourhood as it was understood by the Jews ? Within a territorial and hereditary limit the law of brotherhood had been determinately prescribed ; but beyond those confines by which the letter of the command was bounded, the principle of human fraternity seems to have met with no recognition, unless indeed at the periods when the Hebrews imitated the nations upon their borders in the gratification of a common lust for idolatry. When this vicious disposition had been effectually repressed by the terrible chastisement of the Captivity, there remained, as Scripture shows us, a proud and deep misanthropy, which too clearly proves that, in this region of the earth, at least, man, as such, knew nothing of duty or of love to man.

20. Again : among the most civilised of ancient

nations, the Greeks, it was shameful indeed to break treaties, but wherever there was peace between neighbouring states, it was founded on treaty, or rather truce, upon specific and voluntary compact, unless with partial and qualified exceptions in cases of colonial derivation or of a known common origin. When the specified term of friendship or of suspended enmity had expired, the parties resumed at once their natural attitude of belligerents.* And not the mere habit of war and of marauding prove the extinction of the general law of love; not the mere existence of piracy, but much more the fact, that it does not seem to have been deemed infamous; the uniform recognition of slavery

* Thucydides, in his history, supplies us with many examples of truces and of alliances among the various belligerents both before and during the Peloponnesian war. In these it is very remarkable that abstinence from hostilities during the whole term, and not merely a cessation, is usually specified. It is still more so, that there is no example among them of what we now term a peace: they are all either suspensions of hostilities for a definite period, or else offensive alliances for the purpose of carrying on a common war. The first vary from ten days (between the Athenians and Boeotians, v. 26) to an hundred years (between the Acarnanians and Amphilochians, iii. 114). The latter are in the eighth book (c. 18, 37, 58), between the Lacedæmonians and the Persians, with respect to the Athenian war. Athens too was a formidable neighbour to Persia, while Sparta had no habitual relations with it. Although, however, the attitude of war was thus regarded as being natural to states, there were certain ties of race still recognised, to which we have allusions on different occasions, both as among the Greeks at large, and as among the leading families of which the nation was composed. A part of the Amphictyonic oath ran thus: "I swear that I will never subvert any Amphictyonic city; I will never stop the courses of their water either in war or peace."—Mitford, vol. i. ch. iii. 5, 3. In proof of what I have said of war as the habitual and ordinary state of the reciprocal relations of the Greeks, I would quote the following words of Thucydides:—*ἴδικαντο τι ταῦτα εἰ Αργεῖοι μᾶλλον ἐρῶσι τὸν τοῦ Λακεδαιμονίου σφίσι πάλμαν ισήμαντο (ιε' λέγω γάρ της αὐτοῖς εἰ σπονδαὶ ἡπαύ)* καὶ ἄμφι ἴπτεσαντις τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἡγύεσσαν.—v. 28.

as a permanent institution not less legitimate than any other, and the formal view of the slave as an animate machine, ὅργανον ἔμψυχον;* the prevalence of the law of force, indicated, among other signs, by the relative depression of the female sex; human sacrifices, the devouring of human flesh, the indifference of public law to all private misery and misfortune: these and the like features of ancient society supply us too abundantly with the materials of proof that the sense of a general brotherhood was at an end for all practical purposes, even though it might charm (and there how rarely) the sensibilities of the theatre; that the bond of amity between man and man, as such simply, as creatures having common faculties and a common form, was absolutely broken. If, as compared with the inferior animals, he had more power of discerning the rights of his brother, so also he was better able to perceive or imagine rivalry of interest, to sustain more longsighted and deliberate enmity, to add fuel to the flames of his anger or desire. There was indeed a law that in various degrees bound father to son, Spartan to Spartan, Dorian to Dorian, even Greek to Greek; but there was no law that bound man to man, or nation to nation. And we find only the partial reconstructions of primitive obligation, in the several divinely ordained forms of a common life, constituted by the union of men into bodies. Such then was the general law and office of human association.

21. And this law of mutual association was itself

* Arist. Pol.

so deeply impressed upon the human heart, that, though too weak for practice, yet, as respected at least its domestic form, none doubted that it was to be referred to our nature, and not to any device of the conscious understanding; while, even as regarded the larger form of political society, the noblest of the heathen minds perceived that it was either referable to the same source, as Juvenal;

— Mundi

*Principio indulxit communis conditor illis
Tantum animas; nobis animum quoque; mutuus ut nos
Affectus petere auxilium et præstare juberet;
Dispersos trahere in populum, migrare vetusto
De nore, et proavis habitatas linquere sylvas;**

or at least essential to the general well-being, as Aristotle.[†]

22. I say, then, that the action of the usurping principle of self-direction was repressed and restrained in mankind chiefly by the knitting and blending together the lives of men in domestic and social organisations. It is no figure but a reality which is indicated by the phrase, a common life. It truly means no less than this, that a portion of our individual life becomes subjected to the laws and conditions of a more general life, and therefore in so far ceases to minister to the selfish appetite, and is redeemed from the dominion of the usurping principle. It is placed under a law whose seat is external to the mind and will of the individual, and which is not referred mainly or singly to his independent pleasure or advan-

* Juv. Sat. xv. 148.

† Arist. Pol. iii. v.

tage. Indeed, wherever common life, in any form, is established, then, in the same proportion as it prevails, there must be an actual surrender of the individual will. That which is thus sacrificed is thrown into a common fund, and unity of being, instead of diversity, is to the same extent established, as to everything that gives to being its interest, dignity, or value. And thus natural association in its several forms does in some small measure redress the original evil, and prepares for its fundamental and complete redress; by taking something away from self, it prepares for restoring it to God.

23. Nor does the establishment of this common life attain the negative good alone of abstracting some of the food of the rebellious and self-regarding appetite. It does not throw these energies and sympathies, of which it prohibits a particular exercise, to waste, but, as will presently be stated more at large, augments their power. He who has to care for his family or his country, and who has learned to identify himself with their interests in thought and in deed, feels that the weight upon him is greater than that of any merely individual concern, and exerts himself with more of general vigour, than if he stood an isolated savage in the forest. Self does not now supply either the exclusive subject-matter of his action, or its universal end. By means of association, the relations of kindness and of justice, and the ideas of right and reciprocal duty, take definite form in his mind. He is still individual, but he is not isolated; the lives of

his fellow-creatures have become by fellowship portions of his own ; he lives, he hopes and fears, he suffers and rejoices, he loves and hates, in them and through them, as well as in his single capacity. The poet does but clothe in bolder language those truths of which all have a partial consciousness when he declares his friend *animæ dimidium meæ*.* The sympathy with such an one is as true as that of the body with its members ; and the loss of such an one as real a withdrawal of something belonging to the proper and plenary measure of its existence.

24. It is this corrective to the spirit of self-regard which mainly separates between the human race, as it exists apart from revealed religion, and devils. We have no reason to suppose that the fallen spirits differ from the self-worshipping man in respect of his adopting as his law of action that which is inwardly attractive to himself, for the reason that it is thus attractive. But he who has truly learned to love, in so far differs from the lost angels, that he has found a ground and a motive of conduct extrinsic to himself.

25. Nor is it only in the relations of the family, the race, or the nation, that a common life is established among men. There are many narrower and specific forms in which it exists, as those of the client with his Roman patron, the burgher to his borough, the artisan to his guild, the landlord with his tenant, the employer with the employed. Wherever the principle has been vigorous, man has run a glorious career;

* Hor. Od. i. 3. 8.

wherever it has been torpid, he has left nothing to imitate, nothing to lament. It was the real and enduring praise of feudalism* that it marked, though unequally, all the gradations of society by correspondent classes of reciprocating duties, definite enough to be undeniable, and yet not so precise as to be capable of a mechanical and prefunctory discharge. Not only between the private person and the nation, but between each man and those immediately above and next beneath, a subaltern law of association was in force. Protection on the one hand, and obedience on the other, each to be rendered at all hazards and to all extremities, formed the noble, though imperfectly realised, idea of medieval society, and exhibited in the liveliest manner the theory and practice of a common life. And while this conception is travelling, through many stages of progressive deterioration, to the state in which its elements are to be material production on the one hand and consumption on the other, those lineaments indeed become more and more faint, but yet not indiscernible.

26. If there lurk in our minds the suspicion that this is after all a vain attempt to embody the mere phantasms of the mind, that a joint or common life is either a form of language to which no reality of nature corresponds, or at best an arbitrary and conventional device, in such a suspicion I read partly indeed the result of national habits and pursuits unfriendly to speculation, whether sound or fanciful, but

* Hallam's Middle Ages, vol. i. pp. 321, 322.

in great part also the confirmation of one of the most sinister symptoms of our own time, namely, its tendency to detach social relations from the control of the affections, and to trust for their regulation to law or to economical influences alone; to the former, indeed, mainly for redressing the more glaring abuses that result from the uncontroled dominion of the latter. If we had more fully realised our human brotherhood in practice, if we had more faithfully acted upon the sacredness of these our secondary relations of duty, it would be a simpler lesson to learn the great truth, that all those considerations which separate our individual life from the dullest forms of vegetative existence, and render it a matter of serious and rational concern, do also as strictly attach to those modes of common life of which we are partakers by virtue of our social constitution in its various aspects.

27. Association, then, by setting before us duties to be done to others, enlarges the province of our ordinary practice: by establishing within certain bounds one law for all, it provides that such law shall be independent of, or exterior to, each; and by intertwining our affections one with another, as well as by attaching them to the forms themselves of our fellowship, it gives us the conditions of disinterestedness, and supplies us with extrinsic ends upon which action may terminate, instead of reverting within the isolated sphere of the single being of the agent.

28. It is by looking to the state of the world before the Advent, and beyond the circle of the earlier reve-

lation from God, that we may best estimate the function and the moral power of that fundamental law under which God willed us to be socially constituted; because we may then arrive at it by measuring the actual state of the world with what it must have been had no bond of family, of race, of patriotism, existed among men, and had the selfish appetites in consequence been left to grow by indulgence from day to day into impenetrable obduracy and unmitigated rapacity. Yet, even under the benignant influences of the kingdom of the Redeemer, these secondary influences have been of no less, nay of greater, value, only their beneficial effects have been less conspicuous, because generally blended with those higher results, which the principle of a spiritual life has produced. Yet even this principle, adapting itself to the frame of our nature, is tabernacled in the fellowship of the Catholic Church, the communion of saints.

29. I have endeavoured to show the great moral designs of the fundamental forms of social organisation, which are certainly in the nature of reasons for attaching to them Divine sanctions. I shall now further attempt to prove that the general doctrine of collective forms of religion, apart from purely individual devotions, has a ground not less in the actual and peculiar wants, than in the capacities and purposes, of human association.

30. Let us then consider whether it be not true that, together with those beneficial effects of association which have been specified, there are not others of an

opposite character, which require that it should possess additional guarantees against abuse; and whether, as this participation in the several forms of joint life is a fundamental law of our condition, we be not morally obliged to make the requisite provision against the dangers which it involves.

31. I have said that incorporation establishes relations of justice, and even of mutual kindness, between the body and its members generally ; and also between one member and another. But it does not provide for the recognition of such relations between one who is within its precinct and others who are not; nor between the society itself and persons out of the society; nor between the society and other societies; nor even effectually between the society and particular members of itself. Incorporation establishes an *αἰδως*, a sense of honour and shame, a responsibility, one to another, among the partners in that common life which it has created. But the whole of their extrinsic action still remains unregulated, and the whole, also, of that of the society itself. Nor is there any tendency whatever, inherent in the nature of incorporation, to quicken the perceptions of moral obligation in the members or in the body, with reference to those who are beyond its pale. Thus, then, while it begins well, and, in order to its own organic completion, lays a powerful repressing hand on the action of selfish appetite, and provides for the continuance of that pressure within itself, yet, as extrinsically regarded, it will have brought into existence a new power which may itself be greedy, unjust,

and aggressive, and may perpetrate for the community more and grosser evils than would have been committed by the feebler means of its members as individuals.

32. Reverting to another aspect of the general nature of combination among men, let us observe that it is calculated to produce the following results : a maximum of effect from given means ; a great complication of interests ; an endless diversity of reciprocal influences ; a subdivision, and with the subdivision a great waste and diminution, of that sense of individual responsibility which is felt by private persons in their capacity as such. The first, by economising the application of resources, by setting each man to do that for which he is fittest, and by enabling one man to do the same thing for many. The second, by taking out of each man's immediate province the execution of a large part of that which belongs to his own wants, and making him a co-operator in joint labours and a sharer in joint proceeds. The third, by providing for the intermixture and contact of man with man, in every mode of sympathy, interest, and obligation, to the greatest possible degree. The encroachment of society, by its circuitous influences or by its positive acts, on the individual, varies under different forms of civil polity. Under despotism, a particular person ; under democracy, the mass, override and subjugate his will. But, besides these cases of vicious excess, in every form, from the very nature of society, he must have many extrinsic forces mingling with and modifying his own

agency, and thus greatly complicating the rules of his moral life. Their shades, numerous enough and almost indiscernible when our action is wholly in the individual sphere, and when all our motives are self-derived, are multiplied as by a new set of factors when we come to act in societies. The fourth, because, whenever blame is shared by a plurality of persons, each becomes conscious, as it falls upon himself, that it affects his neighbour also; and that principle of self-love which with most persons is paramount, is forthwith tempted in every one to shift the burden, and to ascribe more to those around him, and less to himself, than the equal share. And as this is done by all, much of the blame due to acts confessedly evil is, as it were, unappropriated, and falls short of its mark. And where many unite to do wrong, the conscience is staggered as by an appearance of authority, and we are tempted to believe it right, or to insist less upon its wrongfulness. In these methods does combination, firstly, enlarge the power of the creature man; secondly, increase his liability to be affected by conduct which he cannot control; thirdly, impair and obstruct his sense of moral responsibility.

33. What has been said may, I trust, suffice to bring into clear, if not full view, the urgent necessity which exists for some provision to meet the increased demands of the collective life in general; to guarantee us, as far as may be, against the increased abuses which will attend the increase of the moving power of human life, by combining therewith an enhanced

moral sense, deriving new strength from new and suitable principles, against the *idola fori** which society engenders, and the delusions which they weave around us; against the heavy visitations to which, in communities, we become liable through conduct of others over whom we have no control, and to secure to us the realisation of the beneficial effects of civil union; lastly, to preclude the fatal operation of that tendency to diminish responsibility and to impair the strength (so feeble at the best) of the principle of individual morality, which we have seen to belong to combination as such, and which, if it be not counteracted by the application of some auxiliary principle over and above the principle of individual morality, may, of itself, or rather must, as it seems, poison the very sources of action and of life.

This remedy has been recognised by the common, the almost universal sense of mankind, as being found in collective religion.

34. This joint, or common life, is what is ordinarily intimated by the phrase, the personality of societies; by which it is represented and carried into action. That phrase becomes applicable, when the community of law, sentiment, and interest, belonging to the common life, assumes the determinate form of incorporation, and becomes subject internally to a deliberative regulating principle. It is not any mere metaphysical or theological abstraction, nor a phrase invented for the purpose of discussion, but a reality, having its own

* Novum Organon, aph. xxxix.

palpable exponents in the persons of those who are in their several departments the organs of the societies, and in every member of them according to the sphere of action which each may fill in virtue of his membership. Now I am to argue, that the powerful and separate moral agency which is thus established, requires the application to it of a consecrating principle of religion, as the moral agency of the individual requires to be consecrated by his individual worship. Wherever in the universe there is power, connected with that moral and reflective consciousness which is the condition of agency, it both is the property of God, the King of that universe, His rightful property, however for a time withholden or abused ; and it can only be as it were realised, it can only fulfil the laws under which He gave it, when it is used for the purposes He has ordained, and in the temper of mercy, justice, truth, and faith, which He has inculcated. But these principles never can be truly, never can be permanently, entertained in the human breast, except by a continual resort to their fountain above, and the supply of the Divine grace, sought and obtained through a solemn worship. And this reasoning applies to moral agency as such, whether it be public or individual.

35. These general positions are alike tenable, as I apprehend, whatever theory we may adopt as to the origin of political power. If it be founded on the consent and will of the majority, that consent and will must themselves act subject to the obligation to sanc-

tify its exercise. The function of choice in the legislature is yet more clear, where government is founded on paternal principles, and the fiction of popular sovereignty is discountenanced.

So, also, is it to be observed, that the conclusion we have reached seems properly to belong to pure Theism, and capable of being supported in argument even without reference to the more peculiar doctrines of Christianity; although it be undeniable that but for the revelation of the Gospel it never could have been clearly contemplated by the human understanding. But before it can reach to its minuter forms among the details of our conduct, it must be compared with many considerations. We are met at once by the fact, that while our duty as creatures to the Creator requires that all our acts should be done with regard to Him as their centre and to His law as their rule, the structure of our mind seems physically to preclude the possibility of maintaining without interruption a conscious reference to Him even while, nay, it may be even because, we are earnestly seeking to obey His will. Ought, then, all the combinations of men, by which new personalities are created, and a common life composed; ought all these, or, if not all, ought any of them, to be specifically consecrated by solemnity of religion appropriated distinctly to themselves?

36. In order to the successful pursuit of this inquiry, let us endeavour to examine strictly into the nature and degrees of personality in societies. Now, although it be true that there is generally in societies a real and

substantial personality, care must be taken to keep the idea which the term conveys distinct from that of individuality. The latter signifies not only actual unity of life, but that unity attended with universal indivisibility ; whereas, moral personality, while it implies unity for certain purposes, is compatible with divisibility in the subjects whose composition goes to form that unity. This personality is recognised by the laws of every civilised nation, and by the law of nations, under which bodies of men associated for the purposes of religion, of learning, of government general or municipal, of science, of art, even of economical and material improvement, are regarded as persons, are dealt with, that is to say, as being in every practical sense agents, with the liabilities of agents ; as discharging the functions, and as bearing the character, of *individuals quoad certain purposes*.

37. But, it will be asked, how do we see that to this limited and qualified individuality, religious responsibilities can in any case belong ? I answer, because it may fulfil these three conditions : the first, to be living ; the second, to be active ; the third, to be moral ; therefore it is capable of, and subject to, religious responsibility.

38. Let us then inquire narrowly what it is that renders the individual, properly so called, a capable subject of religious responsibility. It is plain that it is not merely his individuality ; for a man is not more nor more truly an individual than a brute, and yet a brute is not bound by a religious responsibility. May it not

be something which he has in common with the great moral person of a society of men ? And if it *be* something which characterises him in common with such a complex person, then it follows that the complex person is as capable of the religious relation as the simple one.

39. Imagine the spark of life, under any form in which it merely exists, and discharges no function beyond that (if it be one) of self-maintenance. By the very terms of the hypothesis, there is nothing here but the bare stationary unit, incapable of movement either forward or retrograde, of growth or of decay, of reflection or of habit. Here there is individuality, but no capability of religion.

40. Now, again, imagine that spark of life endowed with power, enabled not merely to be, but to act, to move, to grow, to advance, to decay, to recede ; possessing that which we term a vegetative life ; individuality remains, and something is added, but we have not yet filled up the conditions of moral responsibility.

41. Once more, add something further to the last predicament, and suppose a power not only of expansion and contraction in the life itself, but also of extrinsic action, of affecting for detriment or for advantage other lives elsewhere situated ; and suppose that the being whose action was now endowed with this fertility, this capacity of production, should not only exercise the capacity upon other objects but upon himself, should mould and modify his own being, not by mere growth, but through the medium of action, by the formation of

habits, that is to say, of modified states of his own nature, arising out of his acts ; we have now an active, as well as a merely vegetative individuality, but we are as clearly as ever wanting in the elements of the character of moral agency.

42. One stage in addition, and we have done. Superadd to the foregoing conditions a capacity of reflection, that is to say, of intelligence and consciousness, whose reach shall embrace the whole sphere of action to which the given powers are applicable ; a faculty of perceiving the law by which means are adjusted to ends, and the higher law by which ends are chosen and rejected ; and a free function of choice, of adoption or refusal, upon the view either of ends or means ; and we have now all the conditions which are requisite to fill up the conception of a moral person, a being morally responsible, the subject upon whom, if there be truth in our fundamental conceptions of right and wrong, may be justly administered a system of reward and punishment, of praise and blame.

43. Now there is no one of these conditions which is wanting, I do not here say whether or not in all combinations of men, but in that peculiar combination which we term State. No one doubts that a State lives in the first and lowest form which I have described : no one doubts that it is capable of progression and retrogression in physical or in intelligent power : no one doubts that it is capable of producing great results, great moral as well as great material results, great results of positive good and evil, whether upon itself

at large, or upon its individual members or subordinate combinations, in its dealings with them as extrinsic persons, or upon other combinations of the national and independent form ; that not its reputation alone, but its actual health and its future conduct, are affected by its past conduct. And clear as it is that the sphere of action of the State is one full of the most essentially moral matter, it is perhaps of the whole catalogue of conditions the one less than the rest susceptible of doubt, that a State as such is at least as deliberative as an individual : at least as capable, by its nature, of discerning right and wrong, since it may and by its nature ought to command the very best perceptions of right and wrong, which are found among men, to be enlisted in its service ; at least as free in the use of its organs to do or not to do, since it owns no human superior.

44. Therefore I say that the necessary conditions of moral action attach to personality with the qualified or rather limited unity which it implies, and not to individuality as such, which, though it has absolute unity, need not include moral elements ; and that all these conditions are fulfilled in the idea, in the reasonable theory, of the nature of a State.

Thus much respecting the need of religion in combinations of men, and the capacity of it in States, by way of establishing affirmatively the principle, that a national religion ought to exist, provided the subsequent considerations regarding the proper organ for choosing and defining it, and the right instrumentality

for its profession and propagation, can be practically adjusted. I have endeavoured, in short, to show, that it belongs properly to a nation as such.

45. But does it belong to all combinations of men? Those characteristics of combination, which have been specified above, are general, and not limited to the political form. There are many other kinds of combination among men, from the nation and the family downwards, in a descending scale of dignity and importance. And it may be truly alleged that in these subordinate combinations there is collective power wielded by individual agency, which is one of the foregoing arguments: and that there is in them, or in many of them, common advantage and loss, common acting and suffering, as well as in that great combination under which organised aggregations of men are usually called nations: and hence it is inferred, that if it be right to argue, from these characteristics of collective power and common acting and suffering in political societies, for a national profession of religion, it is equally right to argue, from similar characteristics, that such inferior combinations cannot be legitimately constituted without an analogous profession: and the popular reasoning of the day proceeds in this form,—that, as it is manifestly true that a common profession of religion is not required in these combinations, despite of the existence of those characteristics, so neither need it be required as a condition of the right constitution of a State, which, as is taught in some systems of opinion, existing only for external and material ends,

ought not to embarrass itself with a matter which has come to be of the utmost intricacy from the subsisting divisions of opinion, and which lies entirely beyond its natural province. Is then religion beyond or is it within the natural province of all combinations alike? or of some more and some less? and why of this more than of any others?

46. Of course it is readily to be conceded, that all combinations ought not to contemplate all purposes: that the intrinsic superiority of one end to another is no reason for employing means adapted only to the inferior end in the pursuit of the higher: that all combinations of men have in their degree the attributes of personality and power, common acting and common suffering: and yet that not all are alike bound as combinations to profess a specific religion. Which among them are so bound, and which are not, is the ulterior question, requiring to be determined by an examination of the nature and of the degree of that personality, that power, that common acting and common suffering. For instance, the personality may be (*a*) constant and sustained, or it may be intermittent; it may resume activity only at long intervals, and during the intermediate spaces may have no more than a potential existence: (*b*) it may be temporary and occasional, or it may be permanent. The power may be (*c*) indefinitely great or indefinitely small. The functions, about which the community of acting and of suffering subsists, may be (*d*) applicable to few, or many, or most, or all: may be (*e*) grounded in natural ordinance, or in hu-

man convention and allowance: may be (*f*) narrow, determinate and calculable in amount; or may be overreaching, comprehensive, unlimited, and entirely transcending the range of all foresight and distinct reasoning: may be (*g*) conversant with matters of mere computation, of material interests, of physical result, such as the understanding can with facility anticipate, and such as involve no agency of the kind properly termed moral: or may on the other hand be largely and pervasively connected with the moral faculties and habits of the mind, with the passions and the affections; with the deep foundations, and with the entire superstructure of human character.

47. Now there are two forms of human association, and two only, which answer to the whole of the following description. (*a*) They are general; so that every man not comprehended under them is considered as the exception to the rule. (*b*) They are permanent, either in one single form, or in an homogeneous succession, so that on leaving one we pass ordinarily to another, or, the obligations of the second gather around us before those of the first are fully discharged. (*c*) They are natural, because they do not imply, and never have implied, the antecedent consent of the individual, nor do they even arise out of any peculiar dispensation of God, but they accrue to him as man, in order to his fulfilling the elementary conditions of his well-being. (*d*) They are of unlimited purposes and liabilities, so that no one can be the judge of his own duties in them, or can obtain beforehand any

schedule or formula of those duties. (*e*) They are moral, because they are essentially, and proximately, and generally connected with the state of the moral habits and affections, with the growth and formation of character.

48. One of these is, the family. It is (*a*) general, because all men, unless under circumstances contrary to the usual order of Providence, are born into it. It is (*b*) permanent, because, unless in cases similarly exceptional, our original obligations to it are only dissolved by death; and from the family of one generation as it disappears we create or enter one of the new formations by which the old are continually replaced. It is (*c*) natural, because domestic obligations accrue to men in general independently of their own consent, from a higher law, the will of the Author of nature, expressed not in any restricted or partial scheme, but in its fixed constitution. It is (*d*) unconfined in its right of demand upon us, as it rests upon the broad and comprehensive law of love, not curtailed, but enhanced, by having a specific and primary application to some particular persons: and as there is no limit (in quantity) to our duty of self-culture and self-amelioration, so neither is there any limit (in quantity) to the obligation which binds us to promote at large the welfare of the family around us. Lastly, (*e*) it is moral, because in its offices, and through its influences, a very large portion of our actual character receives its impress and its development.

49. Now it will hardly be denied, that religion ought

to attach to families as such, and that unity of religion is the first condition of their well-being. The want of it does not indeed annul existing domestic obligations, as we know from the highest authority :* and those who reproach the advocates of State-religion with holding a doctrine that leads to persecution, might at least as consistently have inferred, from the general directions to married persons with which the Epistles abound, that the Christian wife and husband would have been commanded to abandon their unbelieving partners respectively ; whereas the very contrary is enjoined. Yet these domestic obligations entail religious duties : of instruction in Divine truth from the parents to the children, of common worship in a common faith. Nor do the reasons of these duties cease to be applicable, until by local dissolution the existing single family parts into the seeds of many.

50. The practice even of the heathen world supports the principle of family religion : sustains it, that is to say, in the same manner as it sustains the principle of personal religion, by supplying us with indications, however rude and perverted, of its acknowledgment. The household had its deities, as well as the temple ; and Æneas, a type be it remembered of the Roman character and manners as they were estimated by Virgil, bore his aged father from Troy with his household, and with the emblems of his household worship :

Cum famulis natoque, *penatibus* et magnis Dis.†

* 1 Cor. vi. 12—16.

† Æn. iii. 12.

51. Notwithstanding all this, however, a man may be, and frequently is, a very kind father without religion. He may educate his children with care, treat them with unvarying kindness, and provide with the utmost sedulity and effect for their temporal welfare, without any regard to God, and merely under the influence of the unacknowledged benefit of those parental instincts which God has given him. Further, it will sometimes happen that a family is orderly and peaceful, without any common religion, where each walks in his own way, and there is either no joint belief and action, or, if any, yet such as is of the most vague and shadowy description. On the other hand, it may happen that a parent, who is in the main conscientious towards God, may nevertheless exhibit some harshness of temper, something of the spirit of wrath yet unsubdued, in the conduct of his parental relations; or may fail in the judicious culture of the understandings of his children, or in the regulation of their ordinary occupations, or in his plans for their temporal welfare. Or again, great pain and disunion may follow from his attempts to instruct his children in the faith which he has received, and which it is his duty to deliver to them. Yet all these causes, whatever might be their right explanation or their proper remedy, or even if they had none, would in no way destroy the general principle, that religion belongs to families in their collective capacity, and not merely to their members as individuals, that family relations entail religious duties, and that unity of religion is,

when we speak of things in their ordinary courses, the first condition of their well-being. So much then for religion in the family, and the reasons of it.

52. The other form of universal association, which I would couple with the family in respect of its extensive range of influences upon the characters and destinies of men, and of its high moral characteristics, is that of the nation or the state.

53. The nation, in its fullest sense, is an aggregation of men having substantial unity in physical origin, in language, in character and customs, in local habitation, and in political life. This unity admits of degree. Of origin and language there may be much diversity, as in the United Kingdom. The conformity of customs and character may be indefinitely various in amount. Even local juxtaposition is not essential to nationality, as we see in the case of the Jews, though it is nearly so. Unity of political or public life to some extent is absolutely essential. We perceive it in that singular people, under its own peculiar form, partly as blended with the theocratic element, and partly as compounded of retrospect and anticipation. Even this, however, is susceptible of gradations, as we may see its slighter forms in the Grecian, the Argive, the Ionic and the other confederations of Asia Minor, among the ancients;* and in the Germanic empire, the Swiss confederation, the

* Mitford on the Council of Amphictyons, i. iii. 3; and on the Argive or Calaurean Confederation, i. iv. 2. Herodotus on the Ionic Confederacy, i. 143, 147, 148; the Doric, 144; the Æolic, 149, 150.

provinces of the Low Countries, the United States of America, and the union of several European countries with their colonial dependencies, in modern times.

54. If we take in succession the terms a multitude, a people, a nation, a state, we rise by progression from a mere juxtaposition of units to a complete moral organisation. When we speak of a multitude, we indicate mere number; when we speak of a people, we separate the governed from the governors; when we speak of a nation, we contemplate them together, but we merge the governors in the governed; when we speak of the state, we contemplate the same personal subjects, but wholly and singly in respect of their partnership in the national life and order, not as individuals, but only as constituents of the active power of that life. We contemplate those who administer affairs, those who compose the legislative body, those who bear office, those who possess franchises, those who pay tax; in short, all who in any way contribute to make up the organic body; that is to say, all absolutely, but each simply in respect of his entering, according to his measure, into its mechanism; and the term regards them with degrees of more or less, according as their capacity therein is more or less comprehensive and efficient. And together with that fluent body of individuals, which is permanent only by succession, the term state includes those fixed laws and traditionary institutions to which they give effect, through which the national character is sustained and propagated, and which, comparatively secure from the

storms of passion and the devouring rust and moth of selfishness, become for the most part the depository and the safeguard of the best, purest, and truest portions of the common life. As, then, the nation is the realised “unity of the people,”* so in the state is that unity made vital and active. The state is the self-governing energy of the nation made objective. Where monarchy prevails it is centralised and represented in the person of the sovereign, himself an integral portion of this realised unity. Through his will the mind of the state is made effective, and becomes action; and the executive power which he impels throughout is the functional life, or organ, of the state, as the state is of the nation. Even thus, in its correlative the church, is understood, along with an organised body of individuals, the laws and forms of institution according to which they are organised.

55. Into the composition of this organ there should enter different elements in different proportions, according to their intrinsic fitness either positively to determine its actions for good, or reciprocally to correct the faults of each other, the interests or forces (in the German phrase *momente*) of nobility, of talent, of property, of numbers; all these, on account of their presumption of merit, or at least of a negative competency, as weights balancing one another; and with and beyond all these, the virtue which is from above, whose title to govern is alone indefeasible, but which on earth, from the imperfection of the forms of

* Coleridge, Table Talk, vol. i. p. 226.

its development, and yet more from the difficulty of applying a test to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit, requires to be sought chiefly through the circuitous medium of other and secondary qualifications.

56. These powers are continually passing into the composition of the governing body, in which we find them no longer in the gross but more or less refined, the weaker elements eliminated or suppressed, and the residue prepared for action. While the term state, in its larger sense, signifies the whole emanation and procession of these powers from their sources towards their concentration and their work, in a narrower sense it considers them apart from their primary springs, and in the determinate forms of the actual public authorities. For the present we have to do with the former.

57. In order to arrive at a comprehension of the general attributes of the state thus defined, let us consider separately what it professes, what it effects, and what it signifies.

Some writers have indeed mischievously exaggerated the office of the state, and even under the Christian revelation have represented it either as the fountain of morality, or at least as supremely charged with the regulation of the large province of relative duty; that province so comprehensive and important that the Redeemer has honoured it more than once with a distinct enunciation* of the law of moral obli-

* Matt. xix. 17; Luke x. 27.

gation, although of course in the highest and ultimate sense it is comprehended within the yet larger commandment that enjoins upon us love to God as the universal principle of action.* Thus they have superseded the paramount principle of our private responsibility. Even these exaggerations, however, may serve for a sign of that real grandeur and comprehensiveness in the functions of the state, upon which they have been built.

58. The state, indeed, does not possess that range of qualifications which caused it to be said of the ancient Egyptians, that they wrought upon the scale of a giant but with the nicety of a jeweller, and which in matters of moral government are the attributes of almighty alone. The state cannot provide for the discharge even of determinate, or as it has been defectively termed, perfect, duty in all its branches; far less can it insure the fulfilment of our indeterminate yet not less real obligations—the maintenance of Christian charity in its higher forms. But though it most imperfectly realises the idea of moral government, yet by its nature it tends and strives towards that consummation, and in its course or *nexus* thitherward, it exhibits signs and embodies portions of moral government in a pre-eminent and peculiar manner.

59. It declares itself against all injuries, whether of word or deed, between man and man, provided only that they be represented in such a form as its cognisance can reach, and as is also exemplary and intelli-

* Deut. vi. 4, 5; xxx. 6.

gible to the generality of mankind. It also professes to establish the same principle of universal justice between itself and its members, to exist impartially for the being and the well-being of all, and to act without respect of persons, though not without respect of characters. And if it do not always fulfil the conception of a just indifference, the very cases, where it deviates from the rule, demonstrate its validity; they testify to the original truth that the state is just, by the strong indignant sense which they arouse in the mass of men, not only of impolicy, but of actual wrong sustained, and of resentment thereupon. So that the state, as such, is indeed invested with the attribute of a limited, but yet, as compared with individuals generally, a less imperfect, justice.

60. While it has so high a standard for even its negative and preventive functions, upon the positive side it pretends to a prerogative of applying to its members, in a manner determinable by its own discretion, the processes of cultivation and improvement. In conformity with which lofty aims, it asserts the most absolute, though still impartial, claims upon all within its pale; the right to dispose, upon its own responsibility and without appeal, of their time, their liberty, their property, and their life.

61. As to what the State effects, we are to remember, that all which it prohibits, it prevents, or punishes; its laws, in every tolerably ordered polity, are put into actual and strict execution; there is no discretion to relax them, except such as they themselves contem-

plate, and, by allowing, create. Thus, though from afar, it imitates Omnipotence in the penal and coercive aspect of its government. And how much is involved in this, even though it is far from the highest characteristic of the State, that while it contains all other forms of our earthly life, so likewise it is that upon which the continuance of their peaceful and effectual existence depends. If we break up the State, even the family must probably be wrecked in the convulsion.

. 62. But here, again, the State is most worthy of regard in its positive offices. By that principle of degree, which it distributes and confirms throughout the whole community, it establishes the discipline of command and obedience, qualified, intermingled, and alternated, in a thousand forms; the discipline most effectual for a progressive nature, in a probationary state. It opens a field for charity, by the reciprocal dependence of men one upon another; for who is there in a State that is not dependent on his fellows? It teaches humility and rebukes the private spirit, by the subordination of the individual to the mass. It forges the chain of order as a sacred thing, by attaching its extremity to the eternal throne; for this is its progression: as the single person is subordinate to the public authority, so the public authority is not a mere will, experimenting at haphazard upon human character and destiny, but in proportion as the State is excellent in its kind, that public authority is itself, notwithstanding its supremacy of will, practically subordinate to fixed and stable law, perhaps the least inadequate

of all earthly representatives of that Divine power which is the true foundation of all legitimate government. And a people is permanently great or the reverse, in proportion as it realises to itself a treasure of this description :

Ἄνθρωποι, οἰκεῖαν δὲ αἰδίζει
τελεότητας, ἢν "Οὐαράς
πατέρες μόνες, εἰδί νο θεατὰ
φύεις ἀνίσχει τελεῖται, εἰδί
μήτε ποτε λάθε καταπαύεται.*

63. Further, the voice of public laws is commonly clearer and nearer to truth, upon the subjects to which they relate, than the average sentiment (I mean not the abstract but the active sentiment, the sentiment which passes into action) of the community. As for example among ourselves : hardly any man dares upon right principles to refuse a duel, and to avow and abide by his refusal ; whereas the law utterly prohibits the practice, and there is a latent sense, it may be presumed, of the righteousness of the law, which prevents every one from so much as proposing its alteration and reduction to the standard of the common behaviour. And this superiority of law to opinion is not a mere and barren notion ; for so long as the law remains above the ordinary practice it has a perpetual tendency to attract it upwards, or to prevent or retard its further depression.

64. Lastly, under this head, let us consider what the State elicits from individuals. Not only is it

* Soph. ΟΕδ. Tyr. 853.

hither that sovereign intellect naturally betakes, and here that it unfolds itself; not only does it give scope and space to the highest energies of the human understanding: it is also directly the parent, and the object, of some of the noblest feelings which belong to our nature, and these too such as operate on the most comprehensive scale. It lifts us by our affections out of the narrow sphere of individuality, yet without resolving them, through unlimited and objectless diffusion, into vague and unreal transports. It probably does far more to stimulate generous action, and to cherish that spirit of self-sacrifice which is so urgently required as a counteraction to our prevailing bias, than any other earthly cause, except the yet more sacred and more directly ordained influence of the domestic affections. It is still, I grant, subservient and instrumental only to the higher work of perfecting individual man, and is in the nature of means ordained to this end; yet it is a main instrument and an absolute condition of his culture, as it is also that comprehensive and overreaching form of the natural human life which includes and harmonises all its other forms, under which they must fall, and to which they must adjust themselves.

65. Still more remarkable is the State in that which it symbolises. Independent of the will of man alike in the origin and in the exercise of its power, it both precedes and survives the individual; and it perpetually presents to him the images and associations of duty, of permanency, of power, of something greater and better

than himself. It claims to represent to us, in that relative sense which alone the conditions of our earthly sojourning will admit, the principles of the Divine nature, inclusively of the power to assert them; to set before us, hand in hand with resistless power, unlimited duration, uniform right, unrespect of persons, the harmony of degree, the law of discipline and retribution. So far as respects the rewards and penalties of this world, it is the only general minister of Divine government, treading unequally in its steps, no more than a shadow of its glory, yet a shadow truly projected from the substance.

66. I have here, it is true, spoken of the State in its idea, rather than of a particular country or constitution. Yet these considerations have practical application to the historical forms of the State, which, in falling below its own standard, has merely resembled the individual; both are still bound to the pattern which they have never exemplified. However much particular actual States may fall short of the absolutely true, all that has ever been recorded of human society testifies to this at the least,—that in the State, considered both as an active and as a permissive power, we find the index both of the characters and of the conditions of the men within its pale; in its peculiar modifications we discover an effect, which is also the most fruitful of social causes, as estimated by its results upon individual being and well-being. Therefore it is that the civil history of man has ever been, under the sanction of that example which is afforded by the inspired

writings of the Old Testament, the history of States, from the time when first the family had expanded into this its larger development.

67. It is very easily seen, upon a review of what has now been propounded respecting the abstract idea of the State, that it fulfils the same grand conditions which have been enumerated as descriptive of the family. Like the family, it is of universal, or, at the least, of general application. Its agency is permanent and annexed to the whole of our life. It is natural, as opposed to what is spontaneous and conventional. There is no limit of quantity to the obligations of the individual towards it. It is moral, and not merely economical, inasmuch as its laws and institutions, and the acts done under them, are intimately connected with the formation of our moral habits, our modes of thought, and the state of the affections, and inasmuch as its influences pervade the whole scheme and system of our being, mingling with the first instincts of boyhood; it may be, even attracting the last lingering look of age on the threshold of its departure; inasmuch as that which we are individually, we have come to be, in a very considerable degree, through and by means of that which we are nationally.

68. Of all the qualities that have here been predicated of the State, there is but one on which I propose to dwell a little in detail; it is this, that the State is properly and according to its nature, moral. In a lower sense this is likely to be admitted on all hands. Every man will perceive that there must be such

things as public faith and justice, or that political society would become an universal and intolerable curse. But the morality of the State means much more than this. It means that the general action of the State is under a moral law, is conversant with moral subject-matter, is fruitful of moral influences. Now, as regards the second of these in particular, the lawgiver, proposing to himself as his idea the establishment of peace and order and the security of property, immediately finds that he impinges upon the subject-matter of moral science; that the same acts which are favourable to politic designs are the acts that general morality approves; that the same acts which are hostile to these designs are the acts that general morality condemns, and that upon a scale which, though there are partial exceptions, ordinarily very much conforms to his. Thus his law and his subject-matter are in relations of the closest proximity, although not identical, with those of moral science. He is to consider how far it may be in his power to encourage, and, on the other hand, by what means most effectually to repress, through prevention or punishment, classes of acts which he must estimate mainly by the standard of that science; although he may be compelled in certain particulars to qualify that criterion by regard to those lower purposes, without the regular attainment of which he cannot proceed to such as are higher. So that law travels over much of the same ground as ethics, and guides its course nearly according to their dictates.

69. If this be the case, then it is clear that (while we

may reserve for another place the consideration of the preventive function of civil rule) the lawgiver has the same need to be ethically instructed as the individual man. The philosophy which holds that the latter will do best to choose his actions by a consideration of their general consequences, and which maintains that presumed advantage is to the human mind the best and most available criterion of right, may propound the same doctrine for the lawgiver. But most men revolt from this position, and maintain that the intrinsic nature of acts is in itself generally accessible to the understanding, as well as the calculation of their results; that it is usually the easier and safer rule; above all, that, according to the Divinely ordained canon, right is intended to be employed as the criterion of advantage, much more than advantage as the test of right. They, therefore, will also hold that the deviser of public law, because it deals (in great part) with subject-matter of right and wrong, and deals with it for the public well-being, must, like the private person, read the guarantees of that well-being in the nature of the acts, and take this nature as a guide to their results, as well as measure his enactments by the results which he is thus enabled to estimate. The lawgiver then, that is, the legislative mind of the nation, must be ethically instructed; which implies that it must be enlightened by religion, upon the basis of which alone it is, that moral science can be effectually reared.

70. And, indeed, the circumstance that the State has primary regard to certain external conditions of well-being, peace and order, so far from overthrowing,

corroborates the necessity for guarding its acts by the forms of religion. Nothing could be more dangerous to moral health than the habits which would be engendered by continually estimating action, of which the subject-matter is admitted to be moral, with exclusive reference to these external results, and with no regard whatever therefore to their intrinsic nature. The practice proceeds upon a false opinion, that we are at liberty to deal with truth upon considerations of simple convenience, and its sure effect would be the general induration of the human heart. But it is a practice to which the State is continually tempted, for the very reason that the law of its being compels it to have some, and that no inconsiderable, regard to these exterior results; and thus it lies under a peculiar need of the influences of religion, in order that a healthy tone of disinterestedness and of public virtue may pervade its action, and hold up an example for private imitation rather than avoidance.

A reflective agency, then, conversant with moral subject-matter, involves of necessity a conscience, which is, *ex vi termini*, the regulator of moral offices.

71. In an earlier part of this chapter* the case of the family has been alleged to be in the main analogous to that of the State. The application of the principle of collective religion is, in the smaller sphere, it has been admitted, more palpable and less disputed.† But of the reality of the analogy between the two we may be persuaded, among other means, by this re-

* Sup. § 48-51.

† Ed. Rev., April, 1839, p. 249.

markable circumstance: that the school of reasoners, which alone in this country has employed the methods of logic in its attacks upon the principle of national religion, and which, therefore, holds out to us the best promise of a certain self-consistency, has likewise proceeded to assail the principle of family religion, and to contend that it is a capital offence against the laws of truth to communicate any bias to the minds of the young, or to inculcate belief antecedently to comprehension. In this very sense, Mr. James Mill has written his essay on 'The Principles of Toleration.'*

72. This idea of conscience in the State is supported, as I contend, by the impartial and weighty testimony of human language, which continually applies the phraseology of duty to its acts, and predicates of them all the moral qualities and their opposites. And I think every man must feel that injustice embodied in law, that bad faith in the inobservance of national engagements, imply something quite beyond the guilt of the individuals who may have been the instruments of the offence, although undoubtedly including it. Further, is it not true that the inward experience of conscientious men, who have been engaged in the discharge of public functions, would yield us a similar witness? Such a man will surely feel, in entering even on the routine of his duties, that he has come under a new set of conditions of action, involving elements quite distinct from those merely personal; that he is impelled to

* Westminster Review, July, 1826. Reprinted in a separate form, London, 1837.

do one act and to avoid another, upon reasons, justified indeed by reference to his own moral obligations as a private man, but felt to have infinitely greater force, and to assume a far higher form, than any such reference singly can supply. He will be sensible, that in yielding to any suggested temptation, in doing or procuring to be done any unjust action (as, for example, in using means to carry a partial and oppressive bill), he is dragging along with himself, not merely into dishonour but into guilt, not merely the reputation, but the positive, subjective, character of the State. He will feel that this great idea of State duty is as true and stringent as the kindred idea of individual duty, and is only capable of being explained away by sophistry of the same kind as that which, from the days of the Cyrenaics and Epicureans, with intervals, until now, has laboured to destroy the principle on which private rectitude depends, and to resolve it into a pure calculation of consequences: thus, as Coleridge* remarks, making that which is the absolute, the one thing needful in every man alike, to depend upon the faculty which of all others is most unequally distributed among the human race.

73. I will propose another reason, which seems to me to prove with clearness that the responsibilities of the nation are not satisfied by the individual piety of its members. The national conscience, or, if this phrase be too alarming, that sense of duty which ought to regulate public acts, should be as far as pos-

* In the Friend.

sible formed upon a pure and comprehensive idea of right and wrong, and as little as possible coloured with idiosyncracy, or individual peculiarity. The statesman should feel that his office demands this larger rule of action, while his conscience must remind him of the difficulty of separating his own opinions, and even caprices, from those conditions of truth and justice which he is to apply to the national service. Even those who hold the loftiest doctrine of the rights of government will admit that it must commonly harmonise in its proceedings with the national character and will. The statesman, then, must resolve to lay aside in his public function a part of his individuality, and very commonly, in all matters that are not of conscience, must act more as impelled than as impelling, more upon the convictions of others than his own. Still the acts so done are acts which may be fraught with most serious, even with highly moral results. At least, they are acts which ought to be, like all others, commended to God. Yet these are acts done, so to speak, without an agent, unless the nation, the moral person of the State, be that agent. They are not the acts of the statesman in any sense, except that he is their instrument; he is, with respect to these, as the soldier in the ranks. He will shift the responsibility for them from himself in proportion as they are less the genuine offspring of his individual judgment; he will feel, and with a degree of justice, that morally, though not constitutionally, it rather lies elsewhere. But what is its true and proper seat? The persons,

whose will he is anticipating, are busy each with his farm and his merchandise, with personal interests or duties. This responsibility, however, which has an aspect so indefinite while we look only at individual men, has, in fact, a legitimate subject, which can consistently and adequately refer all these acts to the Almighty Ruler. There are qualities in a combination which arise out of the union of its parts, and are not to be found in those parts when they have been separated and are singly examined. In the government and laws of a country we find not a mere aggregation of individual acts but a composite agency, the general result yielded by a multitude of efforts, each of which in part modifies, in part is absorbed amid the rest. This composite agency represents the personality of the nation ; and, as a great distinct moral reality, demands a worship of its own, namely, the worship of the State, represented in its living and governing members, and therefore a public and joint worship.

74. To sum up then in few words the result of these considerations, religion is applicable to the State, because it is the office of the State in its personality to evolve the social life of man, which social life is essentially moral in the ends it contemplates, in the subject-matter on which it feeds, and in the restraints and motives it requires ; and which can only be effectually moral when it is religious. Or, religion is directly necessary to the right employment of the energies of the State as a State.

75. It is however, I admit, an entirely equitable

demand that the criterion should be stated as specifically as possible, by which the question is to be decided, what forms of combination admit and require collective religion, and what on the other hand may dispense with or even practically preclude it. And I would hope that the ground has been effectually laid for the performance of this operation. Those combinations admit of collective religion, which are general, and belong to man as such ; which are natural, and so come upon him as parts of the dispensation into which he is providentially born ; which are permanent, and so run parallel to his entire existence ; which are manifold in their functions and unlimited in their claims upon him ; above all, those which, in concurrence with all the foregoing conditions, are moral in such respects as these :—that they require in a high degree moral motives and restraints for the right discharge of the obligations subsisting under them ; that they distinctly contemplate moral ends ; that they exercise manifold, pervasive, subtle, potent, moral influences. Wherever these characteristics can with truth be jointly predicated of any human association, its idea demands, in order to its possessing a right constitution, the ingredient of a collective religion. In proportion as they, and more especially as the last of them, can be truly or probably predicated of any such association, there is an approximation to the necessity for such religion, and at least a capacity, with favourable circumstances, to receive it. In proportion as they are only in a slight degree discernible in any such association, the idea of

Collective religion becomes unnecessary, and at last even inapplicable.

76. Now, to quote a list which a mind of redundant opulence has furnished, all have heard of these among the minor forms of human combination :*—‘ banks, insurance-offices, dock-companies, canal-companies, gas-companies, hospitals, dispensaries, associations for the relief of the poor, associations for apprehending malefactors, associations of medical pupils for procuring subjects, associations of country gentlemen for keeping fox-hounds; book-societies, benefit-societies, clubs of all ranks.’ There are also stage-coach-companies, † railway-companies, † armies. § And it is properly said that there can be no efficient co-operation for any one object, if agreement with respect to every other object is required from those who are to unite for it. The question, however, with which we have seriously to do, is, whether agreement in the truths of religion is to be, not indeed exacted, but by certain means promoted, in any earthly associations, and, if in any, then in what.

77. I am not aware that there is any one of those just enumerated, of which it can be asserted that they fulfil the conditions, which are fulfilled, as has been shown, by the family and by the State. With respect to the State, I contend that it requires in a pre-eminent degree moral restraints and motives in its subjects and its agents in order to the attainment of its ends; in a degree, that is, proportioned to the immense

* Edinb. Rev., April, 1839, p. 241.

† P. 242. † P. 240. § P. 243.

amount of human well or ill being that depends upon its right or wrong organisation. With respect to these inferior combinations I observe, that either they do not require them, or they presuppose them. In either case alike they can at less obvious peril dispense with the machinery of a specific religion for producing them. Thus associations for the relief of the poor, for the support of hospitals and of dispensaries, for charitable objects in general, being in their nature wholly spontaneous, presuppose the existence of moral motives and restraints, antecedently to their formation, in those who voluntarily join them. Companies formed for mercantile profit contemplate pecuniary and not moral ends: they require in general no moral motives or restraints in their mere members; while from their managers they sometimes take pecuniary security; sometimes they proceed upon known character as a condition of office, that is to say again, upon pre-existing and ascertained moral restraints. A State can do neither: it cannot select its members from the mass, nor can it make character a condition of power, nor impose checks fit to ensure the conscientious exercise of civil privilege by pecuniary penalties. And therefore it is not secured in the same manner as some of the inferior societies for the fulfilment of its functions, and requires, consequently, additional guarantees. Associations for specific objects of pleasure, or of professional use, or of social defence—and these include the residue of the entire catalogue—fall within the same observations. In so far as they require moral

motives and restraints, they can either secure them by lower sanctions, or make them a pre-condition of admission to their functions. Their functions are limited: their personality is little more than mechanical: and we should particularly note, that they are capable of being formed on a principle of selection, by virtue of their conventional character, while the State must deal with masses as it finds them, and bear in its bosom a load of alien and discordant elements, by the very law of its existence comprehending all the human beings, good and bad, who may be congregated within certain local limits. Further, these associations do not in any case distinctly contemplate moral results. And, above all, they do not in general fill any large space in the eye of the individual man as such, they do not exercise a ruling and comprehensive influence upon his character.

78. And yet it is well worthy of remark, that even from among these instances, which have suggested an inference hostile to my argument, the truth of its general principle may draw abundant confirmation. For example, what are termed "Benefit Societies," though purporting to be framed for economical purposes, yet, I believe, usually solemnise all their meetings with public and common worship. Our hospitals are, if I mistake not, always provided with chaplains. Workhouses, the principal provision made for the destitute poor by the State, have their chaplains and their schools, where religious as well as secular instruction is provided. And I quote this, although it is a system of public law, because in-

dividual sentiment, it is clear, in this nation entirely concurs with it. But the army in particular, whose ends might so easily have led some to a contrary supposition, is of all the others the most strict, in this and in all European countries, in the establishment of a collective religion. It is quite true that armies of different creeds may have combined for a common object, known in its nature and limited to a particular time; or that different portions of the same army may profess different religions, and still may co-operate upon distinct and definite grounds: but wherever there is close contact and habitual permanent association, the discipline of the army regards as essential the maintenance of a common religion. Nay, in general, the example of the place assigned to divine worship in military discipline goes beyond the scope of my argument, for it has ordinarily been the practice to enforce the observances of religion in a form of considerable exclusiveness. Generally then we may venture to affirm, that collective religion is applicable to combinations of men, in a descending scale of more and less, according as they are jointly comprehensive and moral in their nature and in their results.

79. But the objection which I have been considering may recur in an altered form. If the rule be morally binding for one kind of combination, is it not good for all? If it be treated as a moral rule, and drawn from the nature of human combination as such, must it not be required by every combination of moral beings, inasmuch as there can hardly be any which

shall be entirely void of moral elements and results; and as man is bound to be governed by religion in every act of his life? On principle, it may be urged, the smallest deviation is as fatal to the argument from duty as the greatest, and either all combinations as such, or none as such, must involve the condition of a collective religion.

80. This difficulty will most easily be solved by a reference to the acts of the individual life. It is quite true that as Christians we are enjoined "to do all to the glory of God;" nor can we take any such account of greater and smaller in the particulars of our conduct as to say, actions of such a magnitude are to be truly done to the glory of God, and actions beneath that standard are not. But although it be true that the rule is universal, the infirmity of our nature does not permit its distinct, palpable, deliberate application to each of that infinite series of actions, whereof our life in its common texture is woven. Each separate act, therefore, is hardly capable of receiving its own specific consecration, by being separately offered up to God. And as each act, so it may be that each agency, does not require its distinct system of devotion—Shall then we say that one general form will cover all? The practical effect of such a doctrine would be to place us within one step of atheism. If we separate homage to God from the details of life, and content ourselves with a verbal submission to Him in the gross, our words will become a barren and worthless formula, which will speedily itself be cast away. The

sound maxim will be, to carry the habit of conscious reference to God to the utmost bounds of practicability : to compare the particulars of our life with the Divine law, up to that point at which the comparison would threaten to absorb the energies that ought to be applied to their performance ; and when we move in important capacities, distinctly to seek the blessing of God upon them all. In short, that the dedication of the whole life may be real and cordial, it is required that it be as specific as possible ; and therefore that at least all the leading and more arduous functions of our condition be hallowed by religious worship.

81. If we consider some evidently great and cardinal act of life, which comprehensively affects and modifies its tone, surely all will admit, that such an act ought not to be performed without the special invocation of Divine aid. If on the other hand we look to some extremely trifling act, as rising up or sitting down, some act done, perhaps, without any conscious design, it is manifest, that the nature of our faculties, which requires for the most part a singleness of thread in our thoughts, and the limitation of all that we do to definite time, precludes the possibility of our consecrating all such acts with a positive and active desire for the assisting power of God, which nevertheless is not less truly requisite for the smallest than for the greatest of our movements.

82. Further, it would not be possible to define beforehand what acts ought to suggest to our minds the duty of special prayer concerning them, and what acts

need not be so marked, but might pass and be acceptable to God under a generally pious intention. But although, in any attempt at such definition, we should be bewildered with hopeless difficulties, yet in the daily tenor of life it is not found very difficult to discern and apply a practical rule, according to which it is probable that most persons of just and faithful conscience accompany every act and undertaking which appears to them on reflection of any considerable moment, with a positive reference to God ; while for the rest they will seek that their sense of His presence, and of their duty and dependence, may be progressively quickened and enhanced, so that the lively regard to His will may become more and more extensively applicable to their thoughts, words, and deeds, individually as well as generally, and with explicit as well as with implicit intention.

83. Now I submit that the case is very similar with respect to combinations of men. Many of them are, with respect to the whole sum of our life, trifling and infinitesimal. In many of them, whatever in their personality is moral is so merged in other, by supposition inferior, and yet predominant, elements, that it would not admit of receiving a specifically religious form any more than the religious element in the smaller acts of the individual life. Yet even of this class I am inclined to think the number, though great, is yet not so large as has often been supposed. The impressive admonition of our social circumstances begins to warn us that we are less secure in dealing with men as animals and machines, and abandoning

the cultivation of their higher nature, than we had assumed.* In many more the case is doubtful, and must be governed by a considerate reference to circumstances. In some, as the family and the State, the character of the combination so essentially requires the predominance of the moral element, that its copious interfusion needs to be secured by that specifically suitable provision which has been here discussed under the name of collective or joint religion. It is, of course, impossible to lay down any antecedent rule in such subject-matter, which shall govern cases as they arise with the precision of a mathematical formula.

84. I do not, however, hesitate to go one step further, and to say that it is the infirmity and not the strength of our nature which prevents our applying to minor acts of the individual life a distinct religious consciousness, which should exist anew for each, and should modify each throughout, just as our physical infirmity causes our need not less of the microscope than of the telescope. Indefinite magnitude and indefinite minuteness alike elude the scope of our perceptions, and alike evince our littleness. If we make this a matter of mutual congratulation, we are self-condemned, we are glorying in our shame; and even

* The Rhymney Mining Company resolved, on the 21st November, 1838, to build a church for the use of their labourers, and to endow it with the sum of 4000*l.*—(Bishop of Llandaff's Address at Abergavenny, October 10, 1839, to the local Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.) It appears also, that the Birmingham Railway Company have voted 1000*l.* towards the erection of a church at Wolverton, with leave to dissentient proprietors to withhold their *quota*.

so in the case of corporations of men, having in their immediate view temporal objects, it is a matter to be viewed with some mixture of regret that they can so rarely be formed with direct reference to the principles of religion, under the present circumstances of society, or owing, in part, to the permanent constitution of our nature. Even the production of physical and scientific results is not a matter which ought abstractedly to be apart from religion; and everything which tends, by the law of association, to separate any portion of our life from the supervision of divine faith, is in itself so far unfortunate, and likewise tends in the same degree to weaken the hold of religion as a master principle on the residue.

85. It certainly ennobles the tenure of landed property, that the realisation of its profits is so intimately blended with a thousand opportunities of moral duty and of religious influence. It is, on the contrary, an unhappy condition of some descriptions of pecuniary speculation, that, while they are made effective through the labour of human agents, they usually form with those agents no reciprocal relations, except those which are pecuniary, and yet put them to employments exercising a ruling influence upon their moral condition. I will take, for example, the class of mining companies. They probably have many servants whose lives they expose to constant risk; many whom the discharge of their tasks may detach from domestic associations and from regularity of habits. The nature of these undertakings tends again to create a shifting population,

and to destroy that local fixity which, with the lower class in particular, is one of the main guarantees of respectability. Perhaps the necessary course of the business may require that a portion of those employed should be denied their Sabbath rest. The workmen are remunerated for these moral sacrifices in gold, upon a scale which, as compared with the actual wants of persons similarly educated, supplies a rapid and disproportionate increase to their means, and thereby greatly increases their temptations, while there is no counteractive provision usually made to neutralise these undoubtedly noxious influences.

86. Such things are but too true, real, and practical. The evidence of facts may, and that soon, supersede the necessity of arguments to prove that such a disposal of human labour, however apparently productive, secretly undermines the foundations of society. It is enough for my purpose to have shown, that if the mind and conscience of our own time were sufficiently harmonised and enlightened to admit of adequate securities for uniformly annexing a provision for religious ordinances to the schemes of temporal enterprise and pecuniary aggrandisement, we should probably avoid many kinds of evil which are now engendered among us, on a fearful scale, by the separation of the two, as respects a large portion of our population; and therefore, in assenting to the proposition that there are some combinations of men to which, at the present time in particular, it is impossible to apply the principle of collective religion, it seems to me most

becoming and rational to do so, not with any self-gratulatory admiration of this feature in our character or condition, but rather with shame and depreciation of the Divine displeasure.

87. I return then to the position, that, as the nation fulfils the great conditions of a person, a real unity of being, of deliberating, of acting, of suffering ; and these in a definite manner, and upon an extended scale, and with immense moral functions to discharge, and influences to exercise, both upon its members and extrinsically : therefore it has that kind of clear, large, and conscious responsibility which can alone be met by its specifically professing a religion, and offering, through its organ the State, that worship which shall publicly sanctify its acts. That which, by its governing organ, it professes specially, it must encourage and maintain throughout its inferior members as a part of such profession itself.

88. But some minds are staggered by the objection, that a nation, like other forms of human incorporation, is not immortal ; that no retribution and no reward await it in a future state ; or, as it is sometimes said, that corporations have no souls. But corporations have souls quite as much as they have bodies, and it will hardly be held that they have neither. They have souls ; they have deliberative minds ; they have personality, and with it responsibility. Grant that public personalities are limited to the sphere of this world : this does not destroy their moral obligations. Suppose the doctrine of a future state, as it respects

individuals, were disproved, the foundations of morality would remain; because they in no way depend upon the hypothesis of an unlimited continuance, but are laid in the actual relations between the Creator and the creature, and as long as those relations endure they subsist. It is true indeed that their subjective appreciation in our minds, defective as it now is, would be, if we may imagine such a case, still further and miserably enfeebled; but objectively they would only be affected in so far as anticipation is one of their constituent parts. Surely it is impossible to maintain a doctrine so extravagant as that no obligation can be real which is not eternal. Indeed, if it were held at all, it might as well be applied to things or beings which have had a beginning as to those which have an end. Of course the responsibility of a moral or public person terminates upon the individuals who enter into its composition, as the health or disease of a body takes effect upon the members.

89. But inasmuch as consequences may afford a powerful stimulus to the performance of duty, it has been observed, that prosperity more commonly crowns virtue, and adversity more closely dogs the course of sin, in the case of states, than in that of individuals. In particular instances the results of virtue, under the conditions of this world, are uncertain; but as a general rule they tend decisively to prosperity. Now, individuals are subject to the contingency because the whole tenor of their life may be determined by one or more particular acts; but in communities it is the

effect of average practice which is most surely and permanently felt, and they therefore reap the advantage of the rule in favour of good deeds upon a large scale. So that in some points of view the doctrine of retribution has perhaps a more stringent application to states than to private persons, and thereby makes up for its limitation to the bounds of the present world.*

90. I offer further some incidental remarks, which arise upon a comparison of the several personalities of the individual, the family, and the state. The personality of the family differs from the last in this respect, that it is less permanently sustained by a collective action, as from its sphere it is capable of management without formality of proceedings and written codes. Its relations are more securely founded on an immediate reciprocity of affections. The application to it of the principle of collective religion is far easier than in the case of the state, and for a reason quite irreconcilable with the utilitarian theories; that the maintenance of its specific compact much less requires it, and that that warm confiding attachment of its members to one another and to its heads, which can better dispense with the use of its sanctions, do also prepare the way for their ready acknowledgment and acceptance. In the State neither the principle of affection is so strong, nor that of dependence so determinate, as to obviate obstructions to the acknowledgment of the national religion; but the need

* More's Hints, i. ch. 18.

of the blending and consolidating power of a spiritual principle is thereby increased, and the general obligation is therefore enhanced in proportion to this necessity.

91. But if, on the other hand, we compare the personality of states with that of individuals, we perceive that it differs in point of the tendency to entail moral obligations chiefly in this particular, that, while every individual of adult years has a full free agency and responsibility, the composition of states and their share of moral personality are susceptible of infinite degree. The personality of all states is imperfect in detail, though in essential conditions entire, and cumbrous and circuitous in operation, as well as difficult to be realised in the discursive understanding, when compared with that of the individual. Even when they are ordered in the manner most according to nature, there is much in the community that the governing energy cannot control; it is, as it were, imperfectly projected; there are many practices of its own members which from impotence it is constrained to tolerate, though injurious alike to itself and to morality; but there is nothing in the individual for which he is not at all times fully responsible, and no moral practice alien to duty which he is permitted to tolerate.

92. And if the principle of state personality and conscience be liable to modifications even in cases where the form of political association is single and integral, it follows as a matter of course that it is yet further restricted in various degrees in those instances

where a part only of the properties of such association are found, and where the appertaining duties are consequently curtailed. To this class will belong federations of nations or tribes, partly independent and partly incorporated, as in Germany, Switzerland, and the American Union, where the duties of the state are variously divided between the general and the particular governments. To this class will also belong in part empires like that of Great Britain, to which are attached many colonies and dependencies, either held under treaty or originally constituted of social elements essentially distinct, and perhaps even discordant. But however difficult it be to frame any formula such as shall meet the infinite varieties which the past, the present, or the future may supply, I would adjoin these two observations—first, that the principle of national religion is rather subjected to limitation in its scope and sphere of action by these diversities of circumstance than to any essential change, that quantity rather than quality is affected; secondly, that, while the stringency of its obligations may vary according to the closeness of the political and economical relations in each case, it is desirable to avoid attempting to tighten the bonds of a merely secular connection wherever it has been found impracticable to cement and dignify the union by a true brotherhood in the Christian faith.

93. Although, however, the qualified personality of the state may give ground for the inference that its conscience may lie under conditions of responsibility

different from those which affect the conscience of an individual man, yet there are considerations, not to be wholly disregarded, which tend in an opposite direction.

In certain stages of society and tempers of the public mind, the individual is more independent than the State. The individual can draw lines, which the State cannot; the individual, after he has given countenance to some forms of separation, can still withhold it from others; he can say, for instance, among ourselves, "I have aided the Wesleyans, but my conscience will not allow me to aid the Socinians;" and thus a part of the mischiefs of having no regard to the discriminating characters of truth and error may be restrained. But the State cannot be a discerner and a balancer of particular points in theology; it cannot exercise that continuous function; experience proves that it is impracticable for public law to stand upon distinctions of pure doctrine or opinion; and when it has once recognised communities other than the Church, it seems quite unable, at least in our day, to stop short of any that bear the Christian name: even this barrier it has in some cases overpassed, and, after a pause, may in others do the same.

94. Now, if the argument here offered, from the nature of political or national association, be sound, and if religion, therefore, belong to the right constitution of a State, what are the specific obligations involved in such a proposition? They are generally the same as would attach to an individual conscience owning the law of Divine obedience. First, by prayer

and the other ordinances of religion, to seek for guidance by the grace of God in all his acts ; secondly, in the deliberative regulation of conduct to be careful that throughout all its particulars it follows the line of the commandments of God ; and thirdly, as a part of this general law, to be forward to communicate by all due means to others the benefit which he has received.

95. In conformity herewith, the legislature will hallow its proceedings by prayer, and will frame its laws and employ its legitimate influence for the advancement of religious truth. With the extrinsic propagation of that truth beyond the nation it has comparatively little concern, because all its functions outwards are little more than negative. States are not ordinarily invested with definite responsibilities for other states, although it be nevertheless true that they may sometimes arise. But with respect to the diffusion of religion throughout the body of the nation which it impersonates, this is, in the view of reason, a part of the primary law of its self-preservation and self-improvement. A state recognising the principle of national religion will naturally endeavour to consecrate the people by the extension of personal religion, in order to the maintenance of its own religious life. For they all contribute something, each in his own degree and by methods direct or indirect, to make up that moral person which we term the State. Impersonating and representing them, it receives much of its colour from them, and reciprocally

imparts it. The State cannot be permanently religious if the body of the people be irreligious; and the governing body, in providing for the population the means and even the solicitations of religious worship, acts upon the same principle as the athlete when he anoints his own limbs for the contest. Obedience to the laws will depend partly upon each person and partly upon the tone of public opinion. The propagation of religion throughout classes and families, so as to bring it home to the heart of each man, is alike necessary in the second view and in the first; in the first directly, in the second, because that public opinion is itself formed, and modified from time to time, by what the mind of each individual contributes towards it: it represents the sum, or the balance, of the abstract moral principles of the persons forming the community.

96. This, then, is not a missionary work, but one reflected upon itself. It does not imply that the propagation of religious truth is specifically the end of governments more than of individuals; but that governments, like individuals, in order to render their lives pleasing to God, to fulfil their end which is in both alike His glory, to discharge the obligations under which they lie, must consecrate their actions by religion, and must take the best securities for that consecration. And it is not enough that the members of this combination should offer worship in their separate capacities, more than it would be enough in a family, or would rightly fulfil its idea, that the father, and the

mother, and their children, should each seek, hold, and exercise a religion for themselves. Their acts in each case are essentially joint and co-operative, and, in order to their right discharge, they demand the kindred sanctions of a common worship.

97. The foregoing argument generally applies to the State independently of revelation. When we come to contemplate it as specifically Christian, and to apply to it the rules of that religion, we find that, together with the family, it is distinguished from all other human combinations as being more specifically a Divine ordinance; and therefore in the same proportion these more specifically require to be dedicated to God, their Author, by the consecrating power of worship. Without social organisation man cannot fulfil those relative functions, which are an essential portion of his duty. Without government he cannot have social organisation. Thus government stands, by necessary implication, in the determinate form of a Divine ordinance charged with sovereign authority over a sphere of our relative duties, always saving the co-ordinate rights of family and blood. On both sides of the controversy which so much agitated our own country during the seventeenth century, respecting the claims of government, it was contested whether they were restrained to a particular line of succession, or whether it was essential to sovereignty that it should be clothed in a particular form; but Sidney* admitted, no less than Filmer or than Heylin, that it

* Sidney on Government, ch. iii. 12.

was a Divine ordinance, to which it was not optional but obligatory to submit.

98. I grant that all instruments of good, whether great or small, may be called Divine ordinances, as they certainly are gifts of God, but it is in a sense less definite—a sense not fixed on them severally by the authority of revelation. And the sequence of the foregoing argument is as follows. Inasmuch as we must consecrate all good things to the honour of God; and inasmuch as by the composition of our nature we cannot consecrate each; it results that the specific consecration must be annexed to those which are more specifically His; and that the general consecration of implicit intention must suffice for those which are less specifically His. As being, then, according to revelation, a specifically Divine ordinance, the State, like the family, is a moral, and should also be a religious, being.

99. It is of course the parallel effect of revelation, to embody the obligations of religion, as well as those of civil order and union; and to direct the conscience of men to determinate objects in respect to faith and worship. To heathens religion was only obligatory under those general forms which constitute the law of nature, perceptible by the unaided light of conscience. To Christians it has been given in the shape of a definite and historical institution, charged with the custody and promulgation of its divine code—the Sacred Scriptures.

Indeed it would be allowable to institute the argu-

ment from this quarter. Christianity is a principle of life intended to govern and pervade the whole human life. Further, it is a principle of common life; must it not therefore govern and pervade our human common life, our association in the family, and in the State?*

100. In short, the Church and the State have ends reciprocally inclusive, though with a difference of degree. Thus writes Coleridge:—" Whatever is beneficent and humanising in the aims, tendencies, and proper objects of the State, it" (the Church) " collects in itself as in a focus to radiate them back in a higher quality; or, to change the metaphor, it completes and strengthens the edifice of the State, without interference or commixture, in the mere act of laying and securing its own foundations."† The State and the Church have both of them moral agencies. But the State aims at character through conduct: the Church at conduct through character; in harmony with which, the State forbids more than enjoins, the Church enjoins more than forbids. The Church brings down from heaven a divine principle of life, and plants it in the centre of the human heart to work outwards and to leaven the whole mass: the State out of the fragments of primeval virtue, and the powers of the external world, constructs a partial and elementary system, corrective from without, and subsidiary to the great process of redemption

* Rothe, *Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche*, b. i.

† *Church and State*, p. 134.

and spiritual recovery which advances towards it from within.

101. For the proposition that the nature of the State adapts and therefore binds it to pursue the ends of the Church, I have already argued. That the Christian religion contemplates peace and order, and the temporal well-being of man, in the natural course of its operation, will hardly be denied. But the State has for primary ends, to be sought at once by direct means, those conditions of external order and security, which the Church is rather ordained to reach indirectly by a spiritual process mainly contemplating higher matters. These lower ends of the State are first in time and in necessity; and without their attainment in some tolerable measure, it cannot so much as itself exist to contemplate the higher, because civil society is virtually dissolved. On the other hand, if not amidst “the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds,” yet in whatever agony of external and social convulsion, the Church, by the law of her nature,

—————“from city and wilderness,
In vesper low, or joyous orison,
Lifts still her solemn voice.”*

Yet it is hardly more than a possibility that, in any given place, the Church could long survive social order; it would be her positive duty to use her best efforts for its re-establishment, and she must probably either succeed in the effort, or perish in her failure.]

* Alastor.

In like manner it may be possible that States may subsist without religion; but it is a law of their nature, they are morally bound to its observance; if they do not do so, they may anticipate the sure though perhaps tardy penalties of violated or unfulfilled obligation.

102. Thus, then, these powers are co-ordinate; and each is ordained to ends included within the purview of the other; but the specific function of the one is the less proximate though still morally essential function of the other. Thus a father and a mother are jointly ordained for the same end, as to the nurture of children: thus parent and tutor are jointly, and with distinction of rank, charged with their education. The State is a moral being, and must worship God according to its nature: it is thus intrinsically competent to promote the designs of religion, and extrinsically (as I shall hereafter endeavour to show) it has effective means of aiding them; in both respects it is morally bound to render that assistance. As on the other hand, the ministry of religion, whether under its general or its Christian idea, is able in many ways to promote the purposes of the State; whether those purposes be restricted to a negative and material character, or whether they also include general development: and it is bound to render that service in the course of simply accomplishing its own specific work. On either side, therefore, the principle of connecting religion with the State is grounded in the constitutions of nature. We are elsewhere to inquire, whether it be not also attested by the criterion of advantage.

103. The question seems next to arise, whether, in the case that has now been introduced, of a Christian State, the religious duty which attaches to it is properly limited to the form of the Church; or whether, according to an opinion which has some adherents in this country and has received much practical countenance in others, the civil power may profess and uphold a variety of creeds and communions, limited either by the Christian name, or by an adhesion to doctrines assumed as fundamental? There are two modes in which we may examine this question: the more conclusive, by regarding those direct principles and precepts of revelation which apply to us as members of the Church; the other, by deducing inferences from the more general ethical argument respecting the personality of the State. Let us take these in the order in which they have been stated.

104. Let us now suppose, with Hooker, that the persons composing the nation are all or generally members of the Church, that the decided preponderance of social forces is with the Church, that the governors are accordingly members of the Church: in such case, if they be thoroughly instructed in her apostolic rights and in the nature of her functions, they will not be perplexed by being left to determine this great question upon calculations of expediency, or by the results of an analytical inquiry into the composition of different religions, claimants for state patronage, in order to decide the impossible questions whether there be in them upon the whole more of truth than of untruth, more of

virtuous than of vicious tendency ; and whether they themselves are justified in becoming parties to the inculcation of an hundred falsehoods, for the sake of an hundred-and-one truths with which they may be associated. They are called to no surrender of right, to no bewildering of the conscience. God has given them a vineyard wherein to labour; and they need not go beyond its bounds, for it will afford employment more than enough to all the energies they can set in array.

105. And again, insuperable difficulties of conscience appear still to arise, when we have agreed to substitute for Catholic principles the test of some more vague agreement upon undefined fundamentals, in the practical adjustment of the questions which the present divided state of Christendom could not fail to raise. Suppose we adopt this for our rule; that the State may unite with itself any religious body professing the essential doctrines of Christianity. The fatal objection arises, that there is, manifestly and beyond dispute, no criterion of essential doctrines, apart from the body of the Church, upon which a State could practically act. The same temper which excites a jealousy even of the exclusive recognition of the Church, would create an infinitely stronger and more reasonable dissatisfaction if the State were absolutely to refuse countenance and aid to a body of religionists on the naked ground of some one doctrine or opinion in theology; and at some one it is, whichever that may be, that the dividing line must be drawn. Hardly

any man is hardy, I should almost say presumptuous, enough to frame a scheme of fundamentals for himself, or to place any other restraint, than the want of evidence to establish the fact of God's revelation of the particular tenet, upon his own obligation to believe. But no private or partial opinion, however confident, would supply a *locus standi* for a government, upon which to found a principle of its policy at once so vital and so critical. Because then, by the supposition, deviations from the rule of adhesion to the Church must be limited: and because it is impossible to ascertain any intelligible and practicable method of limitation, we are driven back to the position, that the rule capable of the best prospective determination, and most truly satisfying the obligations of duty, is that of alliance with the Church alone.

106. The Church, therefore, is the society with which, and with which alone, they can consistently form such an alliance as has been here described. And as they know that she will best support the State, so their affectionate regard to her as having the stewardship of grace,* and to Him who is her Head and their Redeemer, will supply them with an accumulated strength of persuasion and of motive to be diligent in promoting a co-operation so natural, so needful, and so valuable. If, in short, we take up the subject as members of the Church, we find her not merely a form, a vessel, an appendage, but a part of Christianity, revealed as one; the doctrine of unity in one society

* 1 Cor. iv. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 10.

delivered to us as a portion of the living covenant; and this of course precludes us, not indeed from discharging obligations incumbent on us as of good faith under any existing laws, but from entering into schemes even for the promotion of God's word in any manner contravening that which He has sanctioned and ordained; and from dropping any portion of His command while the means of fulfilling the whole are graciously vouchsafed to us. While the doctrine of "one body" is authoritatively declared by Scripture, to recognise the Christian religion in separate bodies might be to countenance the sin, which lies somewhere, though it may be hidden, or may be divided among many offending parties, in every such putting asunder of what God has united.

107. But there is also an injurious mental habit, and a hazard of ulterior evils, connected with that sort of eclecticism, which a system of indiscriminate aid to different religious communions presupposes. It seems to imply, and at least it prepares us to believe, that the power of revealed Truth is in the abstract forms of its propositions, just as, when we have accurately stated a formula of mathematics, we know that we virtually possess all its results; and as, when we reduce it to a narrower expression, we are still aware what classes of results we exclude, and how much we retain. It is most perilous to handle Christianity upon such a principle, most presumptuous thus to dispense with a part of God's benefaction to mankind. The Church, indeed, commissioned of Him for the function of teach-

ing, has embodied in her earliest creeds, probably from the authority of inspiration itself, conveyed by the mouths of the Apostles of Christ, the great elementary truths of the faith: not as presuming to discard any portion of what is revealed, but to put more prominently forward in the series of progressive instruction those truths upon which the residue of Christian knowledge is built. But this summary, which she has so received, is meant to introduce and not to confine her teaching. Of this she is, with respect to order and method, the judge: it is hers to endure or to condemn any of the forms of private opinion, limited by the maxim of adhesion to the Scriptures which she holds, and to their Catholic interpretation. But she has never said, and cannot say, With the written Creed, I will be satisfied and ask no more. Much less then can any authority other than hers thus shut up the way of instruction which the Creed lays open; and less still can any such power be entitled to define a new class or form of tenets as fundamental, to supplant the basis of eighteen hundred years.

108. Suppose therefore that a State composed of Christians and Catholics should say, "We will aid all communities in which the doctrine of the Atonement is taught, and no others." First, it would undertake a function not given to it, and would frame a standard of things essential, for which office it was not appointed. Secondly, the standard so framed would be a new one, and would place in the category of non-essentials all other matters; for instance, the Deity of Christ, and the

Sacraments. Thirdly, it would thus classify doctrines simply according to our human apprehension of their consequences, and thereby adopt a criterion which in all moral subject-matter tends to lower and debilitate the tone of those who employ it. Fourthly, it would overlook the fact that all Christian teaching is wholly dependent on the inward energies of the Holy Ghost, the promise of which is given to the revelation as a whole, and not to any particular parts of it. Partial teaching in religion can only be justified as preparatory teaching, or because our physical and social necessities prevent men from realising at once the treasure of the Christian Revelation. But if we countenance a sectarian creed, which is absolutely founded, which builds its distinctive existence and vindicates its separation, upon the negation of what such a State would hold to be a part of the revealed Truth of God, the teaching which it administers is not elementary but mutilated: it is not a part of the body, but severed from it.

109. I am free to admit that, on any other than specifically Christian principles, the human understanding would probably incline to the theory of a plurality of establishments: not as abstractedly preferable to unity, but so also neither as being essentially objectionable. There might be many reasons inclining a State to grant a demand of the kind if it were made; and accordingly we find, that among the cultivated nations of antiquity, where public religion was observed chiefly with a view to its political effects, and the grand re-

quisite was to flatter and soothe and at the same time subjugate the popular mind, the ordinary practice was to enlarge with great facility the catalogue of national deities, subject to the sole reservation, that they should be such as should not tend to displace the old ones. Socrates, indeed, was arraigned for introducing new divinities; but it was because the actual tone of his philosophy tended to discredit the national forms of worship. Rome, the mistress of state-craft, and beyond all other nations in the politic employment of religion, added without stint or scruple to her list of gods and goddesses, and consolidated her military empire by a skilful medley of all the religions of the world.

110. Thus it continued while the worship of the Deity was but a conjecture or a contrivance; but when the rising of the Sun of Righteousness had given reality to the subjective forms of faith, had made actual and solid truth the common inheritance of all men, then the religion of Christ became, unlike other new creeds, an object of jealousy and of cruel persecution, because it would not consent to become a partner in this heterogeneous device, and planted itself upon truth, and not in the quicksand of opinion; and in the same natural order, when Christianity became the religion of the State, it excluded every other system from public patronage. Even so the Mahometan creed is distinguished among the religions of the East for its hostility to indifferentism,* because it

* *Esprit des Loix*, xxv. 15.

is a definite though false belief in revelation ; and should the Christian faith ever become but one among many co-equal pensioners of a government, it will be a proof that subjective religion has again lost its God-given hold upon objective reality ; or when, under the thin shelter of its name, a multitude of discordant schemes shall have been placed upon a footing of essential parity, and shall together receive the bounty of the legislature, this will prove that we are once more in a transition-state—that we are travelling back again from the region to which the Gospel brought us, towards that in which it found us.

111. We have to consider, secondly, the argument from the personality of the State, which, implying cognisance of truth, seems to show that a unity in its profession and its maintenance is, if not necessary in the strictest sense, yet both to be desired, and certainly requisite to the ideal perfection of a State. If there be between any set of distinct religious communions not merely a nominal but a substantial difference of doctrine, then, independently of specifically Catholic obligations, the idea of union with more than one is fatally at variance with the idea of personality and responsibility in the government as the organ of the national life. It is sad when two persons take discordant views of religious truth; but it is still more sad when one person contentedly acquiesces in each of these discordant views, because, though he might not know which is truth, he must know that truth is one. But the State is as a single human being in the view

of the present discussion; for if it have moral action, it must be capable of moral choice; and if it be capable of moral choice, that choice must rest upon truth as one—must rest, at least, upon the nearest approximation to it, and cannot at all consist with jointly embracing systems that are fundamentally or substantially at variance. Whenever, therefore, the State is not in a condition to give itself to the clear intelligible profession of unity in faith and in communion, we may predicate that the national life must, in the same proportion, be curtailed of its moral fulness; for a discordant action is established in the leading faculty of its being.

112. It is moreover clear, that when a State deviates from its actual constitution to commence the practice of indiscriminate support to competing forms of religion, it raises for the consideration of its deliberative ministers and agents a difficult and delicate question. That question is, “How shall I lend my personal agency to carry into effect a principle of which it must thus be said that it both springs from and tends to evil? Can I, in such a matter, go beyond the command of the law, which as such discharges my responsibility? In serving the State, I ought to be engaged with my freest energies to give the utmost possible effects to its acts: can I contribute their use to facilitate a scheme which is faulty, and faulty too in moral subject-matter? Or again, how far may I exercise voluntary functions in a State, a part of whose action is thus disfigured?” These are issues for the court of

conscience, which I am unable to answer by any general terms having the rigour of a formula, that would not rather cause confusion than convey knowledge. There are many similar problems in private life; and our ambition must not be dissatisfied with the want of an absolute and universal solution, far less must a man be forward to condemn his brother where he can hardly feel his own way. But thus much I will say: happy is that man who gives, in his own heart, free but not exclusive scope to the fear of sin; who holds that, for a public man, the first condition of capacity to serve his country is an unsullied conscience; and who, when he sees national advantage seemingly contingent upon his own moral contamination, trusts that God will raise up instruments to secure for his country all necessary goods of earth, and refuses to sell wisdom though it be for rubies.

If it be so, then the practice of manifold or indiscriminate establishment tends to throw public office more and more into the hands of the unscrupulous, and thus aggravates the disorder from which it took its rise.

For the sake of the continuity of the argument respecting exclusive duty to the Church, I have here entered by anticipation on a part of the general inquiry, to which we may now regularly proceed.—

113. There is another aspect of the argument for national religion, secondary when compared with the more abstract consideration of the nature of a State, yet not in itself unimportant. The governing body is com-

posed of individuals, each of whom are morally bound to refer all their acts to God, to select, and with all their strength to perform, such acts as most tend to His glory, and to employ whatever influence accrues to them with the same view. The man who is aware of his duty in these respects cannot, with safe conscience, bind himself to forego such reference; to omit acts which are for the glory of God, and are within his power; and to forbear applying, in aid of religion, influences which government possesses and confers, and which are naturally conducive to its advancement. Such a man will further feel, that when he becomes a member of the governing body, a portion of the national energies are impersonated in him, and take effect in his decisions. The responsibility belonging to them is not satisfied by his private acknowledgment of God, and it wholly transcends his private capacity. His acts become arduous and difficult in the extreme, and pregnant with the most remote and most extensive consequences; and even in this view he feels the need of new religious associations to sustain him in his function, and to teach him how to appreciate it. But further: his acts too are public; the powers and instruments with which he works are public; operating by and under the authority of the law, he sets in motion at his word ten thousand subject arms; and because there is here an agency quite beyond the range of his mere individual function, it must be sanctified not only by the private personal prayers and piety of the men filling public situations,

but also by their public observances as composing a public body, and actuating and impelling the sovereign power. In the collective character,* in which they constitute the organ of the nation and wield its force, they are bound to offer collective prayer and praise.

114. Or in another view. Can a man who undertakes to frame laws on moral subject-matter, venture to approach his task without a distinct appeal by supplication to God for His guidance in the task? If then he makes himself, as respects this purpose, a part and parcel of a common deliberative mind, ought not that mind, into which thus entering he resigns, as it were, *quoad hoc*, his individuality, to seek similarly for the same necessary endowments? And, unless it recognise such a duty, are not the consciences of the persons composing it placed in an inextricable dilemma? If they are so, then, as the ordinance of government is divine, we may be certain that, when its arrangements are not conformable to those requisitions of individual duty, which emanate from the same source, its spirit has been misunderstood and its design perverted.

115. I apprehend further, that a pure theism entirely sustains that precept of revelation, which instructs us, that we are to discharge all our relative or social duties, "as to the Lord and not to men;"† that from the midst of their daily crowd we are to look continually upwards, and to consider evermore the ulterior bearing of our acts upon our higher relation to God.

* Burke, *Thoughts*, p. 185.

† Eph. vi. 7.

And even a philosophy regardless of revelation should methinks instruct us at least in this, that they are made for us rather than we for them; that the results of moral action on the agent are, perhaps, on the whole, more important than its more directly contemplated consequences; that this world is a gymnasium supplied with a complex apparatus, which, when it has fulfilled its purposes upon us, is to be laid aside; in short, that, whatever be the outward circumstances or ordinary tasks of each particular person, he has a high immaterial nature within him, appointed to live under a law extrinsic and superior to these; a nature that emerges from among them, struggles to rise above their level, reserves its inner precinct from their intrusion, protests against being absorbed and lost in the external energies that those circumstances and tasks require, claims to rule over him, and to determine with preferable right the main conditions of his life. By the supersession of this inner nature he surrenders his human birthright and patrimony, the central, the otherwise unconquerable freedom of his being, and he becomes a captive, though chained it may be to a gorgeous and triumphal car.

116. A voice from republican America reminds us in indignant tones of this oftentimes forgotten truth.* “There is one man,” says Mr. Emerson, “present to all particular men, only partially or through one faculty.” “The individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labour to embrace all

* Oration delivered before the *psx* Society. Boston, 1838.

the other labourers." "The planter, who is man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of man on the farm." And so it is especially true that he who holds offices of public trust runs a thousand hazards of sinking into a party-man, instead of man employing party instrumentally for its ulterior purposes; into a politician, instead of man in politics; into an administrator, instead of man in administration.

117. This, I say, is especially true of a period and a country, when the progressive advance and continual pressure of popular principles breaks down the energies and contracts the growth of statesmen, by multiplying the details of their function, and by restricting the spaces of their discretionary action in higher subject-matter. By the element, however, of religion, entering into the work of government, the inversion, as it were, of its figure is prevented, its connection is maintained with its origin from above, and public men may see that the orb is still at the foot of the cross;* and their own superior life should hereby still keep its position above that which is inferior, their judicial and reflective powers over those which of right are subject to them. Upon such a redemption from the slavery of ambition or of business, depends alike the freedom and dignity of their being, and that highest result of its highest dignity and freedom, its implicit submission to God.

* Order of her Majesty's Coronation, p. 36.

118. The argument derivable from the personal obligation of governors for national religion varies in its force, according to the diversities in the relations between ruler and subject. Where the former only exercises power as it were by delegation from the latter, it is impossible to regard his intellect as in any sense the origin of public measures. Yet even in such case, from the violence done to the true principles of personal duty in the holder of office, where no religion is professed by the State, the argument may be legitimately raised. There still are, however, many cases, and there have been more, in which the personal conscience of the ruler or rulers is a more palpable object of appeal than the conscience of the nation. At least, there are those, in which the interval which separates the sovereign from his subjects, as measured by effective power or wisdom, or both, is still very great; and where they are accustomed to receive from him, as from a parent, what he deems conducive to their welfare.

119. If we try the controversy of national religion by such a case as this, the mind revolts at once from the palpable and gross delinquency of a ruler, who, under these circumstances, should decline to use the means with which his station endowed him, for the advancement of religion among his people. It may with truth be said that he would be a monster, condemned not more by Constantine than by Julian, and not more by the sentence of philosophical or religious inquiry than by the universal sense of mankind. And if the function of rulers, in a given set of circum-

stances which are quite conformable to natural order, thus essentially embraces religious duties, it will be difficult to show that at any given point it can be wholly divorced from them, until, indeed, we arrive at the state of things in which government shall have been wholly divested of its deliberative and moral discretion, and, indicating little more than the setting of popular currents this way or that, and the determinations of numerical preponderance, shall be a name serving only to record and to bely its original and true conception.—

120. Upon the argument from Scripture for the religious duties of the State, I shall not venture to offer more than a few general remarks. First, before we arrive at the case of the Jewish commonwealth, we find* that in primitive times, the paternal, the regal, and the sacerdotal functions were united in the same person. Corroborative evidence of this truth appears both in the systems of Egyptian and Oriental religion; and in the records of Greece and Rome. We find its traces in Virgil—

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum, Phœbique sacerdos.†

In the *ἀρχῶν βασιλεὺς* of Athens; in the *rex sacrificulus* of Rome. I refer to these, as probable witnesses that this constitution belonged to the period when the intercourse of men with God was free and familiar; and

* Dr. Inglis, in his work on National Church Establishments, discusses the argument from the examples of the Old Testament.

† Æn. iii. 80.

that it had its ground, like the ordinance of sacrifice, to say the very least, either in our primitive social constitution, or in an express Divine command.

121. The idea of government, as it is exhibited to us in the earliest records of Scripture, includes two great instruments, that of persuasion, and that of control or coercion. As an animal and a rebellious being, man requires the last; as a being of free will, intellect, and affections, he demands the first, as an element of his discipline. The former is represented in religious teaching and ordinance, which work through the will, which lead but do not compel; the latter in civil law, which works without the will, and chiefly leads by compelling. In the Patriarchs these were joined personally. In the Hebrew commonwealth they were separated personally, having divaricated in Moses and Aaron; but they were united nationally, and derived through the lines of kings and priests respectively. "From this it follows, that the union of the Church with the State is not an alliance of two several things, each perfect without the other, but the coalescing of two functions inherent in the first idea of sovereignty. So that both were imperfect until Constantine."* They represent the two leading processes of Divine government, the one of which works upon what is inward by means of what is outward, the other upon what is outward by means of what is inward; and they integrate one another.†

122. The argument of the opponents of national es-

* MS. by the Ven. H. E. M.

† Stahl, Kirchenverfassung, 292.

Establishments respecting the case of the Jews is, that the theocratic form of their institutions renders their case so wholly exceptional, that its precedents can afford us no analogy. Yet the theocracy was, after all, but a narrow and specific form of the general truth of Divine government. It reduced the patriarchal relation of men to the Most High into a shape more palpable to sense, and whose perception was therefore less dependent upon the principle of faith; but the annexation of sacred functions to public institutions was not a novelty then introduced; it was merely a provision for the continuance of an association already familiar.

123. Besides which, we have no warrant for asserting, that the usual administration of the national concerns was conducted by Divine interposition. The sanctions of the moral law were brought nearer to the eyes of men by national triumphs and reverses; the command of God was from time to time announced upon special cases as they arose; but the daily conduct of affairs appears to have been left in the hands of uninspired human agents, who were to judge by the instrumentality of their natural faculties, and to act under the dictates of their consciences, much in the same manner as governors must proceed at this day. Now the Jewish kings appear to have done acts of a character quite as directly religious as at this time we require of Christian States, without any express or special command, and to have been blessed in doing them. Thus Jehoshaphat* sent persons throughout Judah for the

* 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9.

purpose of inculcating the truths of religion. I will not cite the cases of destroying the symbols or the high places of idolatrous use, because there was a definiteness, both in the duty and the crime, which may impair the analogy. But the act of Jehoshaphat appears to me conclusively in point; and I do not know how his competency or his title to perform it can be shown, without showing by implication that the same duty attaches to the nature of modern and Christian sovereignty. It follows that, inasmuch as the will of God approved his measure, the obligation still subsists.

124. The entire Jewish history exhibits in the liveliest form the ideas of national responsibility, national character, national life, and national personality; and I should venture to make a conjecture, though I dare not call it more, that it was the thorough and peculiar impregnation of the whole civil scheme with the functions of religion, which gave to its organisation the tenacity and permanence, that as secondary causes have enabled it to survive such overthrow and disception as would in any other case have destroyed a hundred times over both the substance and the name of nationality. If such be the case, it follows that we are supported in the general proposition, that the acknowledgment of national religion is a sign and condition of permanence in a political system, and that the period when it shall have been repudiated is one when the social energies are enfeebled and relaxed, and tend towards their dissolution.

125. The inductive argument has already been

touched, so far as it signifies or involves the historical affiliation of the principle to a period, when human institutions were modelled upon expressly Divine command. And, so far as it respects the practice of heathen antiquity, I would refer to the second and third books of Bishop Warburton's 'Divine Legation of Moses,'* and to the sixth book of Saint Augustine's 'City of God,'† not with any view to the peculiar purposes of either of those great works, but only as exhibiting a body of facts, which carry the argument afforded by the general practice of mankind, apart from revelation, to as high a degree of authority as in its nature it can reach.

126. The scornful infidelity of Gibbon has indeed alleged, that the politicians of antiquity embodied religion in civil forms, only on account of its convenience for the purposes of government; and his assertion derives a countenance more entitled to respect, from the paradoxical breadth which Warburton, in the volume already cited, has given to his hypothesis respecting the insincerity with which the State religions of old were propagated and maintained. We may, however, freely allow that which St. Augustine‡ has said, that the popular mythologies were disbelieved by the educated minds of antiquity. It does not follow that they disbelieved the general truth of theism, of which Cicero says, *ipsisque in hominibus nulla gens est, neque*

* Works, vol. i. iii.

† S. Aug. *De Civitate Dei*, b. vi.; also b. iv. c. 31, 32. See also Bacon, *De Sapientia Veterum*, Works, x. 163.

‡ *De Civ. Dei*, b. iv.

*tam mansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamsi ignoret qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum sciatur.** It may be vain to look for reality of individual sentiment in the speculative writings of this author; but his extensive knowledge and experience combine with the philosophical timidity of his character to make him an excellent witness to the maxims current among the more enlightened portion of mankind.

127. Is it not more probable, that in many cases statesmen may have used the popular mythologies as the only means of conveying theistical ideas to the vulgar mind, on the principle of Plato, that it was impossible to make the nature of the Deity generally understood?† and according to the practice of Socrates, when, at the point of death, he vowed a cock to Æsculapius,‡ or in conformity with the views of Plato, who may have adopted this means of showing his approval of such an action? Upon this supposition, which however I advance as representing rather the exception than the rule, more instructed persons may have regarded the prevailing creeds as symbolical exhibitions, yet as the real though imperfect vehicles of a truth which they had no better means of developing, and may have employed them allegorically, as Menenius Agrippa is related to have told the fable of the Belly and the Members; they may have deemed it immaterial, if truth in the spirit were ever so imperfectly conveyed, that untruth in the letter, and even much moral impurity, in condescension to human passions, should be attached to it.

* De Legg. i. 8.

† Plat. Tim. § 9.

‡ Plat. Phædo, 66.

128. The force however of the inductive argument in no degree depends upon the question, whether the statesmen and speculatists of old time credited or rejected those popular mythologies which formed the public religions. Perhaps it might be argued, that the more entire and contemptuous their own unbelief, the more cogent the testimony of their judgment becomes in support of the principle of a national worship, as grounded alike in the necessities of civil order, and in all those higher purposes of human association, by which it so powerfully conduces to the discipline and development of character. In this case, they stand as unwilling and reluctant witnesses to an uniform conviction, that a civil religion is essential to the permanency and well-being of States, and their evidence is weighty in proportion to that unwillingness.

129. It may be less remarkable to find those whose individual temperament might have so disposed them, lamenting the prevalence of unbelief, as in the indignant measures of Juvenal—

Esse aliquid manes et subterranea regna,
Et contum, et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque unā transire vadum tot millia cymbā,
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur.*

Or to see Plato building his ideal republic upon the basis of religion,—*θεὸν δὲ πρὸς τὴν τῆς πόλεως κατασκευὴν ἐπικαλώμεθα.*† Or Cicero in his “Laws,”—*Nunc ibidem ab eodem (sc. Jove) et a cæteris Dīs immortalibus sunt nobis agendi capienda primordia.*‡ These were men of theistical schools. But who can avoid being

* Sat. ii. 149.

† Rep. iv.

‡ De Legg. ii. 4.

struck by the circumstance, that others of a more hard and dry, of a sceptical, or a rationalising or utilitarian temperament, are found in the same category. Thus Polybius finds the distinctive character of the Roman polity and the cause of the greatness of the city in the peculiar prominence and power of its religious institutions.* Thus Sallust connects the ancient purity and freedom with the solemn worship and strict regard to the gods, the recent corruption with its decay through the ingress of luxury.† Thus, even Horace, contrasting the excess of selfish expenditure in his own time with the noble character of ancient Rome, sets down among the features of the latter a care for the worship of the national deities strangely opposed to the existing neglect.‡ Thus Aristotle places religious institutions among the first essentials of a State; *ἄν αὐτευ πόλις οὐκ ἄν εἴη.* §

130. With respect to the practice of Christendom, it has been notorious and all but universal. Dante indeed wrote

Ahi Costantin! di quanto mal fu matre
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre!||

But it was with respect to the fabulous donation of that emperor to Pope Sylvester, not to his actual support of religion. The authority of practice, from that period to this, is altogether in favour of the general principle that religion should be professed and supported by the

* Polyb. vi. 56.

† Bell. Cat. Praef.

‡ Compare Od. ii. 15, with iii. 6.

§ Pol. vii. 7.

|| Inferno, xix. 115

State. Even in the United States of America, the only country whose constitution repudiates the practice of lending direct aid, we find an attestation of the position, that the acts of government require to be sanctified and offered up to God by a collective worship. The meetings of her federal legislative body are opened with prayer. It is, I believe, true, that such prayer is offered in rotation by ministers of all persuasions indiscriminately, entered upon a roll or list; Roman, Anglican, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Baptist, Unitarian; I know not how much wider may be the range; I do not ask how far this heterogeneous worship satisfies the commands of that word which proclaims the doctrine of "one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;"* but I highly value the acknowledgment, rendered but the more conspicuous in the midst of such anomalies, that, where civil society and government exist, there should be attached to them a religion.

131. And this authority we draw from the conduct, not only of those who have known and loved Christianity, but of those who knew it not, or who knew and hated it. The Church, by the mouths of all her doctors, has taught the religious duties of the State, and the advantages resulting from the connection. It is difficult for those who walk with her not to feel, in a case of such magnitude and vital import to the purposes of her mission, the weight of her sanction. But it receives corroboration from an opposite quarter. The vigorous common sense of Napoleon perceived the

* Eph. iv. 4.

necessity of public religion in France, in order, not to the maintenance of the physical life of the nation, but to its elevation towards a moral tone. And Julian the Apostate was sufficiently informed by the experience even of a single generation, to outdo Constantine in the opposite direction. History informs us* that he adopted the systematic organisation which the Church was then acquiring, and brought the powers of the State to bear, by a religious establishment, upon the restoration of Paganism. But all men, it seems, at all places, and in all times, of all characters and creeds, have been mistaken in that in which almost alone they have agreed; and the State ought not to be, and cannot be, religious. Never, surely, was there so old an error exploded by so new a truth.

I would seriously urge that the historical evidence upon the present subject approaches nearly to that universal testimony, of which Aristotle,† a mind that flinched from no investigation through servility, has so wisely said—*ὅ γὰς πᾶσι δοκεῖ, τοῦτο εἶναι φαμεν· ὅ δὲ ἀναιρῶν ταύτην τὴν πίστιν, οὐ πάνυ πιστότερα ἔρει.*

132. One more illustration. As it is admitted that the support of religion by the secular power was universal in the early stages of society, and as it is hardly questioned that such support was then conformable to nature, I think we have a right to demand of the opponent, that he should point out to us at what point in the progress of society that has become wrong in governors, which had formerly been so sacred and essential a

* Milman's Hist. of Christianity, vol. iii. p. 70, *et seq.*

† Ar. Eth. x. ii. 4.

duty. In one point of view I allow, that the weight of that charge is diminished. The mind of the subject is now more enlightened, relatively to that of the governing body, than it was many ages back. He is more competent to act on his own judgment, and is less to be bound or led by that of the State. But in another view, the progress of modern civilisation tends, as it seems (at least among ourselves), to press down and to keep down the most numerous class to so low a level in respect of pecuniary means, that a religious provision from the State becomes additionally necessary as society advances, and as the amount of population presses on the means of subsistence, somewhat in the same manner as it has become necessary to make a legal provision for the temporal wants of the poor. It would seem, for example, not unreasonable to argue thus: that if national religion did really befit governments in their commencement, then they cannot be justified in abjuring it, until at the least all the private members of the State are extrinsically supplied with it, that is, are supplied with the means of access to it. For nothing can justify the withholding that supply, in those who have the power to give it, except some inherent incompetency; and that there is no such inherent incompetency in the essential character of governors, their early practice bears sufficient witness.

133. If, on the other hand, we look forward to the idea of a State perfectly organised, and assume its realisation, certainly we cannot but attach to it the

idea of a distinct profession of religion, of the acts of religion attending and consecrating all its proceedings and purifying the motives of its instruments, of unity in belief, of consistency in practice, of the ordinances of Christianity brought home to the door, and thus placed within the easy reach of every man. Even should we frame our conception of government upon the lowest negative theory; should we imagine its perfection with reference only to that theory, namely, the defence of life, property, and freedom; yet, if it be perfect, even in this lowest sense, the supposition surely involves, as one of its conditions, a universal access for the people to religion, and the public, national performance of its solemn acts. If we imagine it free from vice and sin in all its members, still more must we include in its conception a devout and systematic worship. It is, therefore, an obvious argument, that if State religion be implied in the idea of the perfect State, then all true approximation to that idea involves the retention and progressive realisation of the principle of State religion; and if, on the contrary, we are, in point of fact, relaxing our hold upon it, and receding from its practice, then we have no right to delude ourselves with the belief that we are upon the whole drawing nearer to a genuine political well-being.

134. Mr. Burke, "one of the greatest teachers of civil prudence," as he has been denominated by the sagacious and candid avowal of his former opponent, Sir James Mackintosh,* has taught us, in his 'Thoughts

* Life of Mackintosh, i. 75.

On the French Revolution,* that in upholding the principle of a national religion, “we continue to act on the early received and uniformly continued sense of mankind. That sense, not only like a wise architect, hath built up the august fabric of States, but like a provident proprietor, to preserve the structure from profanation and ruin, as a sacred temple, purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injustice, and tyranny, hath solemnly and for ever consecrated the commonwealth and all that officiate in it.” Upon the hypothesis of the opponents of national establishments, nothing can be more unpractical, nothing more visionary; but I trust that a more substantial and sober consideration of the needs of human nature and of the legitimate conditions of human association, has now brought us to the conclusion that truth, and therefore that permanent utility, are at the heart of this glowing diction; just as the accurate drawing of the human form is everywhere preserved beneath the unconfin'd and majestic draperies of Raphael.

135. Now these views require to be strictly sifted. They cannot rest in mere speculation, but if affirmed as true, will be found full of points of contact with daily life, so far at least as regards that large and increasing portion of the community, who are called under the British constitution to exercise some degree of direct influence upon public affairs. Therefore, before finally resting in the principle, let us ask ourselves whether

* *Thoughts on the French Revolution*, p. 175.

we have counted the cost? It is very clear that these later times have been parents to an opinion, that government ought to exercise no choice in matters of faith, but leave every man without advice, or aid, or influence, from that source, to choose for himself. And many hold this opinion under an idea that the overthrow of national establishments, as such, will be beneficial to pure and undefiled religion. They hold and contend thus, quite undisturbed in their convictions by the ominous and yet undeniable fact, that they share them with all the enemies of law both human and divine. They know not the acuteness of Satanic instinct. May they become alive to it while there is yet time! But we have to calculate, as will presently be seen, upon encountering not merely the political difficulties which these strangely mingling classes of men will create, but likewise the more bitter and more painful reproach that we are injuring the cause of Him, whom, in maintaining the union between Church and State, we profess to serve.

CHAPTER III.

THEORY OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

PART II.

THE INDUCEMENTS OF THE STATE IN RESPECT TO RELIGION.

SECTION I.—TO RELIGION IN GENERAL.

1. **T**HUS far upon those reasons for national religion, which, according mainly to the principles of theism, are derivable from a view of the intrinsic nature of political association, as it is impersonated in the State. I now proceed to touch separately upon the argument from consequences, which is the basis of the treatises of Bishop Warburton and Dr. Chalmers, and is also the ground that has been selected for the most part by the opponents of religious establishments.

2. It is one thing, to say that the inherence of any given quality is necessary to any given creature in order to the accomplishment of its purposes whether higher or lower, and another, to say that such a quality attaches to it as one of the proper conditions of its being. It is true that the results of these two forms of argument are precisely coincident one with the other. That which is a condition of the due being of a thing is essential to the attainment of its ends; and that which is necessary to the attainment of its ends is likewise a condition of its legitimate constitution.

But there are practical differences of great weight between these several modes of conducting our investigations. When we treat of such and such a quality, for example, of religion in a State, as advantageous or even essential for the accomplishment of its purposes, we at once depress it into the character of an instrument, and exhibit it as subordinate to the end contemplated; we treat of a duty as though it derived its binding power (under the Divine law) from something posterior to its performance and extrinsic to itself; we separate it, as it were, mentally, from the constitution of the subject; and we introduce more or less the element of contingency, and a dependence on calculations which are in their nature very far removed from certainty, into the question of its adoption. And that adoption stands in the mind as at most the issue of a probable judgment upon difficult subject-matter, instead of ranking among those cardinal principles which the sense and practice of mankind have usually recognised as certainly discernible by the eye of a purer reason, the faculty of intuition, and as alone properly entitled to the name of science. What in the one theory we discover to be fundamental and anterior to human sanctions, in the other we hold as an opinion revocable by the authority that gave it, as in its nature indifferent, and as shining at best by a reflected light.

In this branch of the inquiry, therefore, the State is assumed as calculating and deliberative, but not as properly moral.

3. Having thus expressed a preliminary caution, I now contend, that religion is necessary to the attainment whether of the higher or the lower ends of government. But, first, it may be questioned if this distinction of ends be legitimate. There is, indeed, a doctrine that political society exists only for “material, outward, and mere earthly objects;” that it is a contrivance prompted by necessity for the defence of life and property through the establishment of peace and order; that it is a formula for producing a maximum of individual freedom by an apparent sacrifice, a small payment beforehand, of the same commodity, from each member of the community to the State. Here is the fulfilment of the declaration of Burke, that the age of economists, sophisters, and calculators has arrived.* Here is the twin sister of that degraded system of ethics or individual morality, the injurious legacy of Locke,† which received its full popular development from Paley, and was reduced to forms of greater accuracy by Bentham; which in logical self-consistency sought to extirpate the very notion of duty from the human heart and even to erase its name from language, and which made pleasure and pain the moral poles of the universe. So long as this theory of moral obligation continues to receive among us any portion of that sanction which was once unhappily bestowed on it in places of authority, it must (as the ultimate standard of all our philosophy is to be

* *Thoughts on the French Revolution*, p. 148.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, b. ii. ch. xxi., on Power.

found in the state of the individual conscience,) depress to its own level every other branch of moral science. But now, when the utilitarian morals have been attacked in the very places of their strength,* we may hope that the days of their reign are numbered, and upon the basis of a right conception of man single, we shall naturally found a right conception of man combined and organised.

4. To ascertain the ends of government we must not resort to this or that notion, prevalent in a particular country or generation. It is, indeed, not less sad than instructive, when we extend our view to a larger range of time and of space, to behold the vagaries of human opinion, each revelling within its own domain, be it a little narrower or be it a little wider; each entertained with the most undoubting confidence by partisans, each destined to speedy supersession by the favourites of the coming hour, and either to undergo a final extinction, or to be fixed upon the wheel of some metempsychosis, to appear and reappear, and to merge and merge again. All these in the mean time are condemned out of the mouths of one another by their own irreconcileable contradictions ; among which are, notwithstanding, thinly scattered the fragments of true knowledge, slighted, perhaps, yet enduring, bound by their consistency to one another, and by their common hold upon God, the rock of their foundation. These are

* See Professor Whewell's Four Sermons upon the Principles of Ethics, preached before the University of Cambridge.

they which find occasional manifestation in what is termed the universal sense of mankind, approved by the general conscience, and corroborated even by apparent exceptions. So that there is at all times an inner region where Truth,—

Weak Truth, leaning on her crutch,*

exerts nevertheless her centripetal attraction, and rewards them that seek her, and retains in often unconscious connection with her those whom their individual or partial impulses are drawing off in this direction or in that, far from her, perhaps farther still from one another.

5. Now this universal sense of mankind exclaims against the crude and novel dogma, that the State is appointed to be conversant with material ends alone. It speaks to us in the voice of the best philosophies, and in the common rule of governments, amply recognised, though, like all other moral rules, always unfulfilled. It speaks to us in the praise of those monarchs who have fostered the inward and spiritual life of man; of Constantine, of Theodosius, of Charlemagne, of St. Louis, of our own Alfred and Elizabeth, and in the unwept departure of those who have had no care either for civilising arts or for the propagation of the Divine life; not least of all in the fact, that care for the material advantage of the subject has been generally commensurate on the part of rulers with their wise and effective concern for his higher welfare as an immaterial and an immortal being. I

* Tennyson's Poems, vol. i.

do not say that the most pious have uniformly been the most successful princes, more than that the best private persons have uniformly prospered; but that wise or devout sovereigns have been remarkable also for regarding the temporal, and able and sagacious princes for regarding the spiritual and intellectual welfare of the people. And the nature of a State itself reclaims, as we have seen, against the limitation of its functions to the negative ends of securing person and property; by its hold upon the heart and affections of man, by its innumerable and powerful influences upon his character and his destiny, by its dealing with moral subject-matter; attributes, all far too large to be included within such a definition.

6. Finally, to determine how this question is resolved for us as Christians, what says the Divine word? That the ruler "beareth the sword for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well."* I do not cite this passage, as in former times it has been employed, in order to demonstrate that rulers have duties directly religious; but I contend that it describes them as appointed to maintain a moral law according to all their means and opportunities; and therefore, by the very force of the terms, a law not having exclusive reference to results which are not moral at all, but merely negative. "The punishment of evil doers" is a principle meaning something more than that the ruler must intercept those descriptions of evil deeds which are capable of being classified (for this is the point really at issue)

* Romans xiii. 4; and 1 Pet. iii. 14.

according to their directly injurious effects upon social order; although it of course does not imply his undertaking correction of all kinds independently of the degree of his competency to administer it, yet it surely must imply, that he is to look at the moral element in acts, and to use it as a criterion of their social consequences.

7. And so it has been interpreted: otherwise, why does law attach the very same penalty (for example) to the murder of a widowed pauper, a burden to the State, and having no friends or relations who might be excited to violate public order by avenging her death, and to the murder of the wealthiest and most beloved nobleman of the land? Or why is the provocation received allowed to be an element in the case of a person arraigned for taking away life, but because motives (when proved or fairly presumable) as well as acts are legitimately regarded by public law? If I am asked, on the other hand, why the life of a sovereign should be protected by severer penalties than that of a subject, I reply, not only because that life is more valuable and its violent extinction more injurious to society, but likewise because the sacredness of the person and the function of majesty positively enhance the guilt of the murderer *in foro conscientiae*. So much for penal administration.

8. If we look to the other branch of the Scriptural definition, we shall find that the materialised theory of government leaves scarcely any space for the ruler's contemplating "the praise of them that do well." And practically it has been found, that in

proportion to its prevalence has grown up an extreme popular jealousy on the subject of pecuniary rewards, and a tendency to narrow in the same degree the discretion of the governing body ; except, indeed, as to honorary distinctions, of which, as being upon the same hypothesis mere shadows void of all reality, it exacts little or no account.

9. After all that has been said, I propose that my last witness in favour of the comprehensive theory of the functions of government shall be the popular opinion of the day itself, by which that theory has been commonly resisted. Nay, there are dogmas even peculiarly inculcated by those who resist the principle of State religion, that can only be supported upon this theory. They who say that the State has only to do with the security of person and property and the like, must also, in consistency with the conclusions which they draw against the doctrine of religious establishments, be understood to mean that in the employment of means for that end, it is restricted to such as have a direct and palpable bearing upon it, and are in kindred subject-matter; otherwise they are not at liberty to urge their theory against national religion, inasmuch as its friends are ever ready to argue that nothing can more effectually, nay, that nothing can so effectively, give security to persons and property and stability to public order. But of the instances I am about to cite some have certainly no other than a very remote connection with external and material ends : inasmuch indeed as, in a comprehensive view, the higher instruments of

human cultivation are also ultimate guarantees of public order, it may be difficult to demonstrate in the negative, that they are *not* used simply in the view of their conduciveness to material ends; yet all reasonable presumptions are with us, as nothing can be more contrary to analogy than the supposition of a great mental and moral machinery provided exclusively to subserve purposes of a temporal, external, and material nature.

10. I allude, then, first, to the practice so familiar to the governments of civilised countries, and so commonly that we may well term it universally approved, by which the State lends its aid to the cultivation of the principles of art among the people, and to the diffusion and encouragement of learning. Among ourselves, for example, such institutions as great libraries have long been aided by the public funds, or contributions of the copies of all literary works, exacted by public authority. One of these, as well as a great museum of natural science, and galleries of statuary and pictures, dignifies the British metropolis. And all of these are, I apprehend, supported without exciting any discontent in any portion of the community. Take, for instance, the English National Gallery, an institution decidedly popular, yet one in which the State provides the building and the pictures, at the general cost, at the cost equally of those who enter the doors and of those who pass them by.

11. Although some of us may be of the belief, that Art was intended to cherish some of the faculties

of the human mind highly conducive to its perfection, and to subserve the yet loftier purposes of religion; yet others may and do hold the opinion, that Art in its refined sense, is essentially trifling, or even if not so, yet has been so mischievous in its effects on religion, that it ought no longer to be encouraged. Still the State offers to its individual member those humanising influences which are derived from the contemplation of Beauty embodied in the works of the great masters of painting, at the cost of both these classes alike, without asking any suffrage of dissentients, and yet without raising any remonstrance. Now although in this country, where so little has been done by national means for the fine arts, it may appear that this is in bulk at least a trifling item of public expenditure, and therefore of small concern, I answer that it is quite sufficient, even as it is here exemplified, to support the principle; and that in other countries, at least, the amounts which are devoted to this kind of outlay are in themselves very considerable, and have sometimes exhausted no mean proportion of the national funds. Expeditions undertaken for the advancement of science, and establishments aided or maintained for its promotion, are indications of the same principle.

12. The connection of the Crown with our Universities yields perhaps, however, the most emphatic testimony borne by our existing institutions to the concern of Government in the general culture of the people. In them, according to their idea, all rudi-

mental and inferior learning is to receive its consummation : and they can only, according to our constitutional practice, exist by the direct act and warrant of the Crown. And if we recur to our earlier history we shall find abundant evidence, sometimes, as under James the Second, from the abuse of the power in question ; at other times, and most commonly, from its careful and paternal employment ; that this connection was by no means intended to be nominal or dormant.

13. But the opinion of the day affords me a further testimony so strong and so palpably relevant, that with the present generation it ought to be conclusive. It is the testimony of that sentiment which may fairly be termed in this country universal, that the Government has a legitimate concern in the education of the people. There are indeed differences among us, both as to the matter and the organs of that education. But all the parties which divide the country seem to be agreed in thinking that the education ought to be provided ; that the Government ought to assist in its provision ; and that it should be of such a character as is not limited to external and material ends. Here therefore we have a concurrent assent, from quarters the most opposite, to the maxim, that government is bound to regard the culture of the mind and understanding of the people as a portion of its legitimate province. Although some may say that the people are to be educated for the security of life and property, yet none will contend that this is the sole matter of instruction which the State may propose to regard in

the assistance it affords to popular teaching. And the argument which I should derive from this position is short and simple. The general cultivation, thus recognised as a duty of the State, can only be made either permanent or beneficial by the application of religion; and it follows that if government is bound to the pursuit of the end, it is also bound to the employment of the means, so that those who hold the first have in logical consequence virtually established the second.

14. I would further ask, why does the State clothe all its proceedings in the outward forms of dignity or beauty? Why do we indulge in what has been termed the expensive luxury of monarchy? Why are buildings for the use of the Legislature to be erected on a scale of the greatest architectural magnificence? Why are imposing *insignia* employed in the discharge of the most solemn functions of government? It is not difficult to reply, that such an exterior most truly corresponds with, and best represents, the inward dignity of those functions, as they are connected with the realisation among men of grand but also true and practical ideas. But how will the question be met by those who contend, that the State exists only for the ends of security to persons and property, or the growth of wealth? They abstract from the latter: I believe that they contribute to the former: that as mere external shows they impose upon the uninstructed, and generate a sentiment of reverence which, in the absence of thoroughly intellectual habits, is conducive

To general respect for the laws and to the maintenance of public tranquillity. But observe the dilemma. If this be not only a consequence, but the reason and ground of their existence, then in proportion as we are emancipated from prejudice, and as we become more and more creatures of pure intelligence, the great acts of government will lay aside all those solemnities which are confessedly not of the essence of its duty, and which on this supposition it would be unnatural not to disuse, when the purposes they served for a time are better answered by the direct and unaided action of the understanding; nothing more than what is absolutely necessary will be allowed for the discharge of public functions, and the expenses of all splendour and even of decorum will, if we reason with perfect consistency, be viewed as so much plunder from the national treasury. Undoubtedly a perfect wisdom would be best able entirely to dispense with all exterior dignity and beauty: yet it would also, I conceive, be most solicitous, in due proportion always to the things symbolised, to retain them. But according to this false theory it is literally true, that every advance in the love of knowledge and of truth will be attended by a commensurate decline in the love of beauty in its largest sense, their divinely constituted apparel.

15. Let us, then, embrace the contrary position—that the end of government is the discipline and cultivation of the human nature, and the promotion of its general well-being, by all such instruments as are con-

formable to its own laws and conditions of being. As these laws include moral and spiritual elements, so of those instruments some may, as we are entitled *prima facie* to presume, be moral and spiritual. The effect of such a definition on the argument will be this:—that with reference to the use of any given instrument of culture which has not a direct bearing upon material ends, it must not be refused, *in limine*, as inappropriate to the nature of government; but the question of its harmony or discrepancy must be examined, and it will be allowable or even obligatory, to employ or reject the instrument, according as the one or the other is established.

16. Now religion, or obligation to a Power higher than himself, is the main condition and instrument of the general cultivation of man. That it has ever been so regarded we have abundant proof, independently of the authentic instruction of Christianity. For a moment Lucretius might boast, that it had fallen beneath the blows of his master Epicurus:—

Primùm Graius homo mortales tollere contrâ
Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contrâ;
Quare Religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
Obteritur; nos exæquat victoria celo.*

And such a tradition has revived, at intervals scattered along the course of the history of the world. But both the wisest and by far the largest portions of mankind have reclaimed against its tenour; and to our human faculties there is no more satisfactory criterion of truth

* i. 67, 79.

among controverted opinions, than that it is found where numbers, understanding, and virtue coincide. As respects the wisest; how does religion form the staple of the subject-matter of all the higher philosophy of the ancients! It attracts as a centre the mysterious questionings of the heart, and the speculations of the intellect revolve around it. Sometimes acknowledging the need of guidance; *τοῦτό γε δὴ πάντες, ὅστις καὶ κατὰ βραχὺ σωφροσύνης μετέχουσιν,* ἐπὶ πάντος ὁρμῆς καὶ σμικροῦ καὶ μεγάλου πράγματος θεὸν ἀει που καλοῦσιν.* Sometimes deplored the absence of divine revelation; *πότε οὖν παρέσται ὁ χρόνος οὗτος, ᾧ Σώκρατες, καὶ τίς ὁ παῖδεύστων;*† Sometimes admitting the universally pervasive power of the supreme Deity :

A Jove principium, musæ, Jovis omnia plena.‡

And

Deum namque ire per omnes,
Terraque tractusque maris cœlumque profundum.§

Sometimes seeming to grasp clearly the combined character of the Creator and Father of men. *Huc enim pertinet, animal hoc providum, sagax, multiplex, acutum, memor, plenum rationis et consilii, quem vocamus hominem, præclararā quādam conditione generatum esse a summo Deo.|| Inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute. Amicitiam dico?*

* Plat. Timæus, 8.

† Plat. Alcib. Secund. § 23.

‡ Virgil, Ecl. iii. 60, from Aratus, Phænom. v. 1, *ἴε Δίοις ἀεχάμπισθε.*
Cf. Cic. de Repub. i. 36.

§ Georg. iv. 221.

|| Cic. de Legg. i. 7.

*Imo etiam necessitudo et similitudo. Quoniam quidem bonus ipse tempore tantum a Deo differt, discipulus ejus æmulatorque et vera progenies; quem parens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat. . . . Bonum virum in deliciis non habet: experitur, indurat, sibi illum præparat.** It has been thought that Aristotle affords an exception to this general rule, and that in his Ethics he attempts to construct a system of human practice without reference to deity. But in truth it is far otherwise. His ethical system is avowedly an introductory one, and it terminates in the exact adaptation of the human to the Divine life.†

17. And as of science, so also was religion the life of art. If I further cite in this place its pervading all the systems of civil government, as a proof of its being the first instrument of human culture, it is not in ignorance of the fact that State religions were frequently impositions deliberately palmed upon a credulous multitude. In truth the argument is, as we have seen,‡ hereby strengthened. For here, according to the supposition, were governors, themselves void of all belief in the mythological worship which they upheld, yet sedulously impressing it upon the people; why this but from the experience of its results? of its power in part by the images of beauty and grandeur to humanise the rude minds of men; in part by the solemnities of the oath,§

* Seneca, *De Providentia*, c. i.

† Eth. Nic. b. x. c. vii. viii.

‡ Ch. ii. § 115, 116.

§ Polyb. b. vi. c. lvi. δι' αὐτῆς τῆς κατὰ τὸ δέκατον περιουσίας τὸ καθήκον.

to maintain the cementing influence of a reverence for truth ; to attract veneration to the person of the ruler by his participation in sacred offices ; and thus to consolidate the social body, as well as through terror to restrain from crime. Even this last was a great though negative instrument of civilisation ; it was the best and only one which, while Paganism reigned, was applicable to the masses of men. It tended to check deterioration at least that would otherwise have been accelerated, if it did not guarantee actual improvement. I rely much, therefore, even upon those accounts of the origin of religion which, as that of Polybius,* for example, represent it as introduced into States for the purposes of kingcraft or of social order ; because, however unhistorical in themselves, they afford at least the important witness of their authors to its power and necessity as an instrument of general cultivation. There is also a still lower theory of its first reception, that of Capaneus in Statius,

Primus in orbe deos fecit timor :†

which has been expanded by Lucretius ‡ and the whole

* Polyb. b. vi. c. lvi. Ιμοι γι μὴν δεοῦσι τῶν πλάνην χάριν τοῦτο πεποιητέαν εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν σόφου αἰδεῖν πελίτιμα σπουδαῖαν, θεος εὐδὲ ἦν αναγνωτὸς δι ταῖς οὐραῖς. Ιερὶ δὲ πᾶν πλάνης ιεροὶ ἐλαφρὸν καὶ πλήρες ἱετορίαιν παρατίθειν, ἵρυης ἀλόγων, θυμῷ βάνων λατεταῖν, τῶν ἀδηλωτῶν φόβους καὶ τῆς τοιενῆς τραγωδίης τὰ πλάνην ενιχνεύειν. See also Varro in St. Aug. de Civ. Dei, b. iv. c. xxxi. xxxii.

† Stat. Theb. iii. 661.

‡ Lucr. v. 1165 :—

Unde etiam nunc est mortalibus insitus horror,
Qui delubra deūm nova toto suscitat orbi
Terrarum, et festis cogit celebrare diebus.

And ibid. v. 1217.

Epicurean school. For even these recognise the fixed belief of mankind, that it was both required and adapted to exercise that function of repression and control, which is an essential though elementary part of our discipline as men. The stratagem was not the thought of a moment, nor the peculiarity of a single spot, nor the mean shift of feeble minds, but it was at least the scheme of all ages and all places, and of the subtlest and most sagacious wisdom that mankind could boast.

18. And when we arrive at the case of the Christian religion, which effects the restoration of the relation between man and his Creator, we find at once that the spiritual principle claims the sovereignty over his whole existence. Body, soul, and spirit, each and all with their whole strength, are to be offered up to God. Life is now no longer a collection of temporal occupations terminating, as to any calculable results, upon this world; nor yet a mixture of such with a separate system of spiritual occupations belonging to another state; but one homogeneous discipline, by instruments some of which are visible and some unseen; having some of its parts directly and exclusively spiritual, some in their first aspect temporal, but all truly spiritual, because, whatever may be the outward form and immediate subject-matter, all tend to the formation of habits in the man, and each of these habits in its degree disposes him, in a manner either favourable or adverse to the union and amalgamation of his will with the will of God. Therefore there is but one absolute end

of all human functions, although there be many intermediate and secondary ends. All the offices and all the incidents that attach to our condition are providentially adapted to the elaboration of this great work. All the actings and all the sufferings which may mark our earthly destiny are of small moment when considered in themselves, as compared with those results which they leave behind them, stamped inwardly upon us. In religion, then, we see the one truly supreme and universal form of the human life, as it was redeemed by Christ, under which and from which, as from a mould, every other must receive its proper character and its modifications. That is to say, in every act of every system, the thing first and most to be remembered by every man as a man is, that he is a member of Christ. This consideration is to be applied by him to any proposed action, both as a limiting condition and as a moving force; that which he omits or does, he omits or does in virtue of it; all must be judged by a comparison with it; all must bear fruit for good, through their conformity to it, or for evil by reason of their discrepancy from it.

19. And even so, allowing for the interval which must still separate the conduct from the principles of men, it has actually been. For in practice, and even against his will, if not through it, religion is the great instrument of *making* man; of forming, moulding, educating him. In spite of his inborn aversion to things divine, the religion of a country is ever found

by actual experience to exercise a more determining influence upon its character and destinies, than any other cause. It penetrates into men through innumerable channels, unseen as well as visible, and not only as proposing motives and reasons from without, but by actually conveying into the breast a hidden influence, which works at the very roots of the will.

20. And it has pleased God at times, even apart from miracle, to command the course of events to yield the most illustrious proofs of the might of His revelation. Let us look to the period of the crumbling away of the great image* of the Roman Empire. Even as the Redeemer descended into the grave, and made it the source of a new spiritual life, so did Christianity go down into that sepulchre of national corruption, to which the world had already verged at the time when the Church began to gather sway, and impregnated it with the seeds at once of religious energy and of a brighter and better civilisation than mankind had yet beheld. The Church did place herself at the head of speculation, of art, of power, of social and of military (which were not wholly unsocial) institutions, and did in a word educate the entire man. The day came,† when art, unsatisfied with its glorious career, sought emancipation from the power of religion, and obtained it; made the expression of divine

* Dan. ii. 31—35, and 40—43.

† Rio, *L'Art Chrétien*; and *Romsbeschreibung*, vol. i.

and immaterial beauty the second object, and external design in its several requisites the first.

Ex illo fluere ac retro sublapsa referri.*

The similar emancipation of philosophy gave us Lockes and Paleys, instead of Dantes and Lord Bacons. The man of our own day who has stood pre-eminent for the powers of speculative thought, far above all others of his generation in his country, Mr. Coleridge, has been the man that has also laboured with might and main to re-establish the maternal relation between theology and all other science. Let us hear his own words :

“ There is one department of knowledge which, like an ample palace, contains within itself mansions for every other knowledge; it is biblical theology, the philosophy of religion, the religion of philosophy ! ” †

And again of the middle ages :

“ The theologians took the lead, because the science of theology was the root and the trunk of the knowledges that civilised man, because it gave unity and the circulating sap of life to all other sciences, by virtue of which alone they could be contemplated as forming collectively the living tree of knowledge.” ‡

21. But there is no more striking proof of the power

* AEn. ii. 169.

† Coleridge’s Letters, vol. i. p. 13.

‡ Coleridge’s Church and State, ch. iv. p. 51, ed. 1839.

of religion as an instrument of general culture, than that refinement and true delicacy which it spreads throughout all classes of the community. In fact, if we compare the Christian peasantry (for instance) of Great Britain, among whom so much of courtesy without adulation, and of genuine elevation of feeling, energy of personal conscience, and love of truth, are to be found, with their heathen ancestors, we shall find that these qualities are not reasonably to be accounted for by reference to greater intellectual culture as their source, much less do they proceed from, though they harmonise with, a state of comfort superior in many points to that of their remote forefathers; but that they are usually owing to the presence of religion as a peacefully indwelling and governing principle, the blessed result of a parochial system. It might also be allowable to cite the experience of those who have engaged in schemes of benevolence for the civilization of savages; and who still find,* as it was found of yore, that Christianity alone affords the basis of a lasting general culture. Considered, then, simply in the light of an instrument available for the general cultivation of men, religion is most appropriate to the service of the State.

22. Montesquieu has summed up as follows the causes which form, as he says, *l'esprit général*, that national character which must be taken as the basis

* Report of the Aborigines Committee of the House of Commons, 1837.

of legislation ; *qu'on nous laisse comme nous sommes.*

The constituents of this national life are—

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Climate. | 5. Ancestral traditions. |
| 2. Religion. | 6. Morals. |
| 3. Laws. | 7. Fashions.* |
| 4. Rules of State. | |

But this idea is more powerfully represented elsewhere. I need not apologise for introducing in this place a passage of no less truth than grandeur, which, by unfolding the system of instruments whose combined action nourishes and forms a true national life, likewise indicates how many are the objects which, in such measure as time and opportunities permit, a State may embrace within its view :

23. "We will venture to say how, in the mercy of God to man, this heart comes to a nation, and how its exercise or affection appears. . . . It comes by priests, by lawgivers, by philosophers, by schools, by education, by the nurse's care, the mother's anxiety, the father's severe brow. It comes by letters, by science, by every art, by sculpture, painting, and poetry, by the song on war, on peace, on domestic virtue, on a beloved and magnanimous king; by the Iliad, by the Odyssey, by tragedy, by comedy. It comes by sympathy, by love, by the marriage union, by friendship, generosity, meekness, temperance; by every virtue and example of virtue. It comes by sentiments of chivalry, by romance, by music, by decorations, and magnificence of buildings; by the culture of the body,

* *Esprit des Loix*, xix. 4—6.

by comfortable clothing, by fashions in dress, by luxury and commerce. It comes by the severity, the melancholy, and benignity of the countenance; by rules of politeness, ceremonies, formalities, solemnities. It comes by the rites attendant on law and religion; by the oath of office, by the venerable assembly, by the judge's procession and trumpet, by the disgrace and punishment of crimes; by public prayer, public fasts; by meditation, by the Bible, by the consecration of churches, by the sacred festival, by the cathedral's gloom and choir; by catechising, by confirmation, by the burial of the dead, by the observance of the sabbath, by the Sacraments, by the preaching of the Gospel, by faith in the atonement of the cross; by the patience and martyrdom of the Saints, by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost. . . . Whence the heart of a nation comes, we have, perhaps, sufficiently explained; and it must appear, to what most awful obligations are held those, from whom this heart takes its texture and shape; our king, our princes, our nobles, all who wear the badge of office or honour; all priests, judges, senators, pleaders, interpreters of law; all instructors of youth, all seminaries of education, all parents, all learned men, all professors of science and art, all teachers of manners. Upon them depend the fashions of a nation's heart; by them it is to be chastised, refined, and purified; by them is the State to lose the character and title of the beast of prey; by them are the iron scales to fall off, and a skin of youth, beauty, freshness, and polish, to

come upon it; by them it is to be made so tame and gentle, as that a child may lead it."*

24. There is, however, a lower theory of civil government, according to which its end is either simply negative, and lies in the avoidance of certain kinds of evil, namely of injury to property and persons; or, so far as it is positive, is conversant only with the modes, direct or indirect, of accumulating the means of material enjoyment. "Political power, then," says Locke, "I take to be a right of making laws with penalties of death, and consequently all less penalties, for the regulating and preserving of property, and of employing the force of the community in the execution of such laws, and in the defence of the commonwealth from foreign injury; and all this for the public good.† Even according to this restricted view, I contend that national religion is not only useful, but absolutely re-

* I copy from a fragment (which is cited in a letter of Mr. Basil Montague's to the editor of the Life of Sir James Mackintosh, vol. i. p. 159) of a sermon delivered by Dr. Rainsden, in 1800, before the University of Cambridge. If there be no full record of this magnificent production, it does not speak well for the generation to which it was given.

† Locke on Civil Government, ii. i. § 3; ix. § 123, 124; and First Letter on Toleration. Warburton's Alliance, b. i. ch. iv.—"Whatever, therefore, refers to the body is in his (the magistrate's) jurisdiction; whatever to the soul, is not." Hoadly's Answer to the Representation of the Committee of the Lower House of Convocation, ch. ii. sect. xi. Mémoire en Faveur de la Liberté des Cultes, par A. Vinet: Paris, 1826. A theory somewhat similar is to be found in the Edinburgh Review, April, 1839, pp. 235, 236, 273, 276. Paley has avoided this rock, holding "that the jurisdiction of the magistrate is limited by no consideration but that of general utility."—Moral Phil., b. vi. ch. x. The *prima mali lubes* is, I suppose, to be found in the passage which I have cited from Locke.

quisite, in order to the full realisation of the purposes of government.

25. Indeed their attainment must, in strictness, at the very best, be partial : it follows that, as the means for ensuring them are at all events defective, we cannot properly dispense with any of them ; and that a condition of society in which there are impediments which prevent any of them from being brought to bear, is an essentially vicious condition.

Now it is agreed on all hands to be the duty of the lawgiver to aim not merely at the punishment of criminals, but at the prevention of crime; and indeed that, in the regulation of penalties, he must take into his calculations the manner in which they will probably operate as examples. He may punish crime when it occurs ; he may weaken the temptations to its commission by known and efficient provisions for its detection, and by the intelligibility and certainty of the law. But he thus acts only on the fears of man, and, indeed, upon his apprehensions in their grossest form, in which they most approximate to the brute creation, namely, as having reference to immediate consequences. Nor has he any power to act otherwise ; indeed, he may be materially checked in the use even of these instruments by circumstances defying his control. There are morbid states of the public mind, in which sympathy with the criminal is not duly subordinated to abhorrence of the crime, and in which, accordingly, the law-giver must either lower the scale of penalties beneath the amount necessary to deter men from offending ; or

he must endanger the whole administration of criminal justice by placing or leaving it fundamentally out of harmony with the public sentiment.

26. In this dilemma, Religion offers him her aid. She points out that it is hers to act more powerfully even upon the apprehensions of men by denouncing against sin the terrors of eternal punishment. She adds, that there are other and nobler means of moving or controlling the human heart. Reward, which the temporal ruler can so rarely make available, she exhibits to the view of men in its most durable and majestic form. But she does much more than this, and operates more effectually within the pale of the Christian dispensation, through more legitimate principles of duty. It is her prerogative to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the heart, and, sitting at the very fountain of action, to alter and regulate its springs. She provides the human being with a new canon of right and wrong ; and, by a subtle and potent influence, she assimilates his inward composition to the code she has delivered, with the Divine commission in her hand, and the promises of revelation as the unfailing support of her labours. Thus the man, whom she begins to govern, clings to the acts of duty for their own sake ; they coincide with the bias of his renewed nature ; and he will now undergo menaced pains for their sake under the same law of an inner impulse as would previously have led him to dare the penalties of statutes rather than forbear to gratify his appetites. And as his dispositions are thus brought into radical harmony

with the commands of the lawgiver, so also he will have learned through the same agency to recognise in his rulers an appointed ministry of God.

27. So much for that function of the State which regards the repression of crime; and if we look to the other branch of the definition, and inquire how Religion will affect the private person with respect to the positive end of acquiring outward goods, we find that she forms in him the habits of care, industry, and forethought, and that she teaches him to regard as portions of his sacred duty the maintenance of his family, and the avoidance of all enervating luxury; the very results which a secular and even materialising policy should most desire to secure.

28. If we regard the will of the State in its relations with that of the private person, it is easy to show yet more specifically how Christianity tends, by making men good subjects and citizens, to reconcile these often conflicting principles. It is by destroying that law of self-will and self-worship, the ancient idol, the great lie of this world, which galls and scourges us even until now. The antagonist truth is, that our mere will does not constitute a rightful law of action, but is always to be led by regard to extrinsic grounds of duty, to grounds assuming a thousand appearances, which are themselves but signs of the supreme will, our true and only law. It is by teaching man not only his actual poverty, but his moral and essential dependence; by teaching him, that the mere fact of his wishing to do this or that does not constitute a

reason for doing it, unless he can trace that wish up to some higher cause or object; that Religion takes away the grand principle, as of individual, so likewise of social misery and disorder.

29. Undoubtedly she does not propose to private persons the will of governors, as constituting in all cases a law to which they are implicitly to submit; this were to substitute one human idol for another. But she does this: she inculcates absolute obedience to all law not sinful, while it continues to be law, as the essential condition of order in societies. And with respect to the alteration of laws, or the introduction of new ones, she puts every individual in a condition to exercise with contentment the function which the constitution assigns to him, be it that of merely expressing his desires, or that of giving any suffrage or decision upon the subject-matter proposed; because she commands one and all concerned to abjure the law of private inclination, and to direct their observation to the common reason and justice of the case, which all should be, and when they have obeyed those injunctions all are, able in a considerable degree to appreciate. If it be replied, men do not obey these injunctions, it is only equivalent to saying, men are not thoroughly penetrated by the influence of religion, and this, instead of weakening, only enhances the inducement to avail ourselves of every probable and reasonable means of bringing them under her more effectual control. “*Dire que la Religion n'est pas un motif réprimant, parce qu'elle ne réprime pas tou-*

jours, c'est dire que les loix civiles ne sont pas un motif réprimant non plus.”*

30. We have, then, these distinct heads, under which the efforts of Christianity, in the due development of its functions, directly and most powerfully aid the purposes of the State; by proposing more powerful motives to do good and avoid evil; by the general development and invigoration of the human faculties; by the formation, in particular, of the active habits most conducive to the order of the State; by removing the great obstructions to unity and peace in societies, caprice, self-sufficiency, arbitrary will; and thus predisposing the minds of men to submit to reason. I might well add, by the importance which must be given, on religious principles, to peace, as a distinct substantive object, for which, independently of its positive results, and when considered merely as implying the absence of the opposite evils, much ought to be sacrificed and endured.

31. There also seem to be more specifically political uses of religion. It is religion that softens and humanises warfare; it is religion that enables States with security to economise human suffering, and to mitigate the sharpness of their penal codes; because, reminding men (to say no more) of future rewards and punishments, it provides a consideration which stands, whether more or less, in the place of legal sanctions.†

* Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*, xxiv. 2.

† Ibid. xxiv. 14:—“Moins la religion sera réprimante, plus les loix civiles doivent réprimer.”

It is religion that has often neutralised in part the evil and the sin of private quarrels, when it has invested them with the form, as in the case of the ordeal by battle, of simple appeal to God as the final and supreme Arbiter. The very remission of physical labour which has belonged to religious festivals in general, to those of Christianity in particular, and most of all to the Christian Sabbath, is to be regarded as a direct and great gift of religion to society at large.

32. But further, religion has not always been a development of truth differing only in its amount, or of truth clearly preponderating over error, as the preceding argument seems to assume. Besides the genuine substance of revelation, which acts thus beneficially upon men, there are also semblances and counterfeits, which, though fictitious, yet, partly by outward resemblance, and partly by their secret unconscious hold on human pride, interest, or passion, are commonly taken for Religion, and, operating under her name, appeal to those genuine and best sympathies which she commands, so as to usurp for sinister purposes much of her power. In general, indeed, where Divine Truth is known, these hostile forms are artful mixtures of her real substance with falsehood. Hence it has been under the name of religion that many of the most anti-social doctrines have been promulgated, and with the most fearfully disorganising consequences; as, for example, by the first Anabaptists of Germany, and by the Fifth-Monarchy-men of England. Hence, beyond the Christian pale, we have

seen in Egypt* and in Babylon† religion become the direct ally of lust: in the Suttee, as formerly in the worship of Moloch, the actual destroyer of human life: in the wide-spread institution of caste, the instrument of establishing among men, instead of a law of love, almost a law of mutual aversion and contempt. How, then, are these to be repressed, but by the promulgation of a genuine system which shall appeal with clearer credentials to the same potent motives, and shall enlist them on the side of order? Thus, therefore, it is directly in the interest of government generally to enter into alliance with true religion, for the sake of avoiding those great positive hazards which, as history shows, are continually apt to arise from fanaticism in its various forms.

33. Now, further, it is a general maxim of State policy, that in order to civil unity the sovereign power ought to be in direct alliance with all the greater social forces which act upon the community. That, too, which is intended to be first in a nation, ought to be separated by a considerable interval from what is second, lest the distinction be too fine to be perceived by the common eye. If we consider the tendency of religion in proportion to its vital prevalence to draw forth generous gifts, and consequently to accumulate endowments, we shall find that, in respect of mere property, the Church, in the natural course of its extension,‡ tends towards a condition in which the re-

* Herod. ii. 49.

† Ibid. i. 199.

‡ See Bishop (J. B.) Sumner, Charge I.

gulation of its property might wholly derange the social machine unless it be placed under some special supervision and control of the civil authority, to which all property is of right subject. Yet mere property affords no adequate measure of the social power and magnitude of religion.

34. It was the misfortune of France under the Capetian dynasty, that her monarch was but one degree more powerful than several of his great feudatories; it was the simultaneous felicity of England, that, from the time of the Conqueror generally, a very broad line was drawn in respect of possessions as well as of prerogatives between him who sat on the throne and those who surrounded it. Now religion, as long as it has any sort of unity, and dwelling as it does in earthen vessels, may, if apart from the State, become too strong for the State, and its professors may use their power against the legitimate designs of civil government. It is true that we find a remedy for this dilemma in the sorer evil of such an extensive prevalence of schism, as shall prevent the growth of a common religious feeling, by placing what ought to be its constituent parts in a state of reciprocal antagonism, and leaving them as rival interests to neutralise one another.* But such an alternative we may dismiss from our consideration, as far more pernicious even than the great mischief it averts.

35. It is true, on the other hand, that religion, even when allied with States, may become too powerful for

* *Wealth of Nations*, iii. 210—212.

them: as when in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the exorbitant ambition of the papacy had reached such a pitch of boldness as to claim the patronage of all the benefices of Christendom, an authority to unbind the social compacts of Christian nations, and the entire sovereignty of the heathen world. But the tremendous collisions which these claims must have produced were softened or averted by the subsisting alliance. The great war of investitures was the crisis of the general connection between Church and State. It was through that war that the terms of their relation were mainly defined. But the length and obstinacy of the struggle shows us that, where the religious element was vigorous and one, there was no alternative between the dissolution of society and the blending together of its two great laws of sympathy—the composition of its grand moving forces, the principles of political and of Christian organisation. And lastly, when the spirit of English nationality was still too tightly curbed by the papal dominion, the remedy which, following out the instincts of nature, it sought, was not breaking the ties which bound the Church to the State, but drawing them closer by assigning to both these bodies a single and domestic centre of ordinary motion. So that the menacing consequences of perverted religion, and the hazards of ruinous disorganisation from detached religion, combine with other and positive reasons to offer to the State the strongest inducements to cement an union with the spiritual power.

SECTION II.

TO THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR.

36. I have thus far considered the general inducements by which religion, regarded at large as a system of relations to a superior power and to a future state, to a Being and a life beyond the limits of visibility, attracts the State, independently of moral obligation, to form friendly connections with itself; only here and there letting into view the peculiar principles of Christianity, and not at all touching upon the pregnant controversy that is at issue between the claims of its several forms.

I proceed to contend that the argument of inducements, independently of Christian principles binding upon the conscience, determines among these competing claims in favour of that advanced by the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, which providentially still holds, and promises to hold, among us, the double sanction of ordinance human and divine.

37. Undoubtedly the political and general principles, which lead us to the conclusion that a religion ought to be established, will likewise lead us somewhat farther, and show us that it ought to be established along with the best guarantees for its permanence that can be obtained. That which the ruling powers, which the wisdom and virtue of the nation have expressed as the truth of religion, and chosen amidst rival and surrounding, but in their jud-

inferior, forms, they ought also to gird about with fixed institutions and practices, and to embody in permanent records, in order that it may not thereafter relapse into one of those inferior species, and leave the nation for whose benefit it was designed a loser to the extent of that inferiority.

38. It is the wisdom of man, and especially of the public man, placed upon the watch-tower for the advantage of his fellows, to look beyond the present, whether of time or place, until his eye fails him in the distance, because that which is future has as real and as important relations to us, who are immortal creatures, as any one of the moments ticked away within our hearing; and we may observe, in corroboration of this general maxim, that even human laws deal with some rights not yet in operation as having real existence, and as entitled to consideration on principles of justice. This truth holds not only with reference to our state after death, but likewise as respects our span of earthly life; much more does it hold of nations, whose future in this world bears a larger proportion to their present than that of individuals; and of rulers and lawgivers, as acting for nations. In all laws and institutions therefore they will esteem their durability a capital element, and they will beware of being entrapped into the fallacious assumption, that whatever system can upon the moment show the greatest amount of activity and effect, is, therefore, the one which in the longer tracts of time will give a similar result. In short, the fable of

the tortoise and the hare is applicable, in its moral, to institutions, as well as to individuals.

39. The fixity which is obtained by laws is inoperative and dead, unless there be a corresponding sentiment animating the human beings by whose instrumentality they are to be carried into execution. But upon the other hand, that motive principle, which man alone can supply, is capable of being incited, assisted, governed, and perpetuated by the existence of a fixed extrinsic record having all the veracity and authority which can attach to any of our acts. The statesman, therefore, if for a moment we suppose him in the situation of one choosing the modifications under which a national faith is to be established, would see that preference is to be given to a scheme, such as that commonly termed Quakerism, over any such forms of Christianity as decline to receive the entire word of God, and claim the right of denying its divinity where it clashes with the preconceived opinions of its readers; because there exists in the one case, and not in the other, a permanent unchangeable attestation of the principles professed at one period of time, which attestation is in the nature of a moral, though of course not infallible, security for their being preserved at another.

40. But further. To a form of Christianity like Quakerism he would, and still on principles purely political, prefer a form like that of Independency, or that adopted by the sect of the Baptists; because, in addition to the volume of the revealed Word, they

adhere to the use of certain significant institutions termed sacraments, which, setting aside for the time all consideration of their higher uses, are witnesses in attestation of the sacred Scriptures, by which they also are themselves attested.

41. Again, he would prefer to these communions, which reject all summaries of doctrine formed from the Scriptures, a system like that of the Church-establishment of Scotland, which, by adopting a stated Confession of faith, limits the interpretation of the sacred volume, and tends to fix a belief more definite than that which follows all the fluctuations of mere individual or traditional judgment.

42. And lastly, and upon the same human considerations as before, he would again prefer to this the polity of the English church, which, as it is extrinsically viewed, and independently of its highest or "transcendental" * character, superadds to the evidence and guarantees of the Word, of sacraments, of creeds, and of primitive practices, a perpetual succession of clergy by whom these have been received, as they were delivered, in regular order from hand to hand; and which thus supplies us with a living voice of perpetual witnesses, in addition to those which are not active without a human agency to set them in motion. Indeed, schemes of ecclesiastical polity, in proportion as they found themselves wholly or partially upon private or local opinion, have no choice except between these two alternatives: either to be

* Chalmers' Lectures, lect. vi. p. 178.

subject to perpetual and unlimited fluctuations, if their definitions in theology be few and their scheme liberal; or, on the other hand, to push dogmatic instruction into extreme rigour and detail, and, by the severe method of preliminary subscription to an immense multitude of propositions, to restrain, as by bit and curb, the free action of inquiry. Our Church-history will supply abundant examples of this proposition: it might not be difficult to illustrate it by the decrees of the Council of Trent, as well as by the Westminster Confession of Faith,* and by many incidents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We may judge, on the other hand, how dangerous liberality of temperament itself becomes under a scheme not founded on Catholic principles, when we find so excellent a person as Dr. Doddridge protesting against requiring an unity of belief from teachers of religion with respect to the Trinity.† Therefore the State, in allying itself with the Church, adopts the course not only of utility, but of a greater indulgence to tender and uninstructed consciences.

43. Another prudential reason which would induce the statesman to prefer a form of religion provided with fixed guarantees of permanence in itself to one without them, is this—that the religious system of a country cannot be administered directly by the State itself. The practice of mankind, unless with the pecu-

* Vide inf. ch. viii. § 52. Cardwell's History of Conferences, pp. 132, 178, 185, confirmed by Neal's History of the Puritans.

† Doddridge's Correspondence, iii. 293.

liar exception of the papacy, has been to separate, almost universally, the functions of civil government from the persons of the priesthood, or those of priesthood from the persons of civil governors, when society has attained any considerable magnitude. The State, therefore, cannot be immediately and permanently cognisant of the doctrines taught, in the sense of exercising over them that supervision from day to day, which belongs to ecclesiastical superiors. Consequently its relations are formed with institutions; and as teaching is always, though in different degrees, liable to vary and degenerate, it is the interest of the State to contract with that which shall offer the fairest probability of retaining all the features which it had when the contract was made, so as to save the necessity of revision and the risk of rupture.

44. Thus much of permanency. But now of truth, which is its foundation. As a statesman believing in God (for we have not yet invested our ideal person for the purpose of the present argument with the responsibilities of a member of the Catholic Church) will prefer revealed to unrevealed religion, the one coming to him as matter of knowledge, the other of conjecture; or, at the least, the one as determinate, the other as undefined; even so, still on the same principle of theism, he will be bound to prefer the entire revelation of God's will to any partial exhibition of it. The two conditions, therefore, for which he will naturally look, are these: all that is attainable of truth in the religion itself, and of fixity in the institutions appointed for its

maintenance and propagation. And these conditions meet in the Church, attested as she is by eighteen hundred years of chequered, indeed, but never interrupted existence.

45. But the State has this further and very great advantage in alliance with the visible and perpetual society which is appropriately termed the Church of Christ. It is most difficult and invidious for governors to select any one form of mere opinion as such, and to endow it, or to prefer any institution simply for the reason that the doctrines taught in it are agreeable to the views entertained personally by themselves. Now the Church professes to be an institution not deduced by human reason from any general declaration of God's will, but actually and (so to speak) bodily given by God, founded through his direct inspiration, and regularly transmitted in a divinely appointed though human line. The State, therefore, does not here propose a conception of its own for the approbation of the people, but something more palpable and objective, an institution, to which it has itself yielded faith and homage, as of Divine authority; and the homage which it has thus paid is done not upon grounds of opinion alone, but with these to the authority which that institution possesses from its historical connection with Christ and his Apostles, corroborated as well as conveyed by the cumulative witness of all the succeeding generations. The difference is twofold: it is that between inheritance and acquisition; it is that between an attested and a conjectural authority from God.

46. The inducements, of which the enumeration has now closed, are all matters intrinsic to the Church; and up to this point I have endeavoured to show, that rational men, entertaining the average belief of men in a Creator, and serious in it, and being called to exercise the functions of government, ought to apply to the acts of government the offices of religion, for the discharge of their own and of the national responsibilities before God; and that in inquiring, not already under Christian prepossessions, what is the best religion for the profession of the State, they will, even without taking into view the scope of particular doctrines, arrive naturally at the adoption of the Christian Church.

47. If, however, the claim of the Church be preferable for State purposes, it does not seem at once to follow that it should be exclusive,* as against sects of Christianity professing to concur in its fundamental doctrines. Yet some considerations of utility will lead us towards this result, though they may scarcely reach it. Some kind of unity is not only desirable but needful for public decency and order. Now an unity of opinion can never be absolutely insured, and it is properly a question of degree; and it would be impossible for a government permanently to contract with any set of opinions as such, because it could not be competent to detect deviations in their subtle and nascent forms, so that it might only become aware of their existence when they were too strong to be corrected and repressed.

* This question is further pursued in chap. ii. § 103—112; and in chap. v.

And the name of Christianity affords no security whatever for the substantial unity or convergency of the doctrines taught. There must be, for example, a far wider space between Catholic Christianity and Unitarianism (regarded in the abstract), than there need be between Unitarianism and the religion of the works of Plato. We might, then, argue for the Church on principles of reason, as offering, in her oneness and permanency of communion, the only adequate guarantee of that unity which is so important to the State.

CHAPTER IV.

THEORY OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

PART III.

THE ABILITY OF THE STATE IN RESPECT TO RELIGION.

SECTION I.—AS TO ITS EXTENSION.

1. IN the foregoing chapter it has been argued at length that the State, as such, has a true and moral personality, and should therefore profess and practise a religion. That this sphere of duty includes the particular obligations to adapt the laws to the principles of the State religion on all points of definite contact between them, and to hold them generally subordinate to such a regulating power; and to make provision within its limits for the maintenance, and the perpetuation from age to age, of the chosen system of belief and worship; by the instruction of the young as they grow into consciousness and responsibility; by supplying sacred ordinances to the poor, who are so engrossed by physical necessities that they have not the means of providing and supporting them on their own account; and by a pervading machinery for soliciting the unwilling and the spiritually dead through the agency of suasion. It has likewise been shown how the law of interest coincides with the higher yet parallel law of duty. The reasoning,

When it has arrived at this point, is met by a counter allegation now to be described and examined.

2. Those writers upon national religion who are hostile to the alliance between the civil and the spiritual powers, avoiding for the most part the ethical examination of their subject, have made amends, as it were, for this timidity by their courage in contesting even the modest proposition, that the powers of this world are competent to render some amount of service to religion. And they do not hesitate to assert, on the other hand, that the agency of States, when employed for such a purpose, both deteriorates the quality and curtails the quantity of religious observance among the people.

3. Now it has at least the appearance of the very extreme of paradox to contend that, while Christianity confessedly demands the offering up of the whole heart of every man to God, while art and science, and even material pursuits, are capable always of substantial, and generally of direct, consecration to Him, that the greatest of all earthly powers, the very crown of that human nature which the Gospel claims entire, and the most conversant, after the domestic authority, with moral subject-matter, namely, the governing power, should be hopelessly and permanently disqualified from all direct service to religion, and that, too, contrary to the uniform persuasion and practice of mankind.

4. Let us, however, attempt to grapple with this paradox, and to show in succession, first, that govern-

ment is qualified to be an instrument for the profession and extension of religion ; and this both, 1. by pecuniary, and, 2. by moral means, which last embrace the various heads of worship and of the examples that it affords ; of the adaptation of law to the rules of religion in all subject-matter determinable by them ; and of indirect influence upon the tone and fabric of religion itself : secondly, that its putting such instrumentality into action is not naturally calculated to deteriorate, but, on the contrary, to improve the tone of personal religion.

5. With respect to the first proposition, that the State is competent to aid in the extension of religion, it is chiefly contested so far as it regards the point of pecuniary support : and it is contended* that the spiritual condition of the United States of America is more thriving than that of Great Britain ; that a public expenditure on account of religion checks and freezes the streams of private beneficence, and thus prevents greater contributions than it supplies. With this is incongruously associated the proposition, that State assistance engenders a plethoric habit in the teachers of religion, and that through the influence of wealth they sink into a general torpor. But it often happens that two forms of assertion, which can scarcely be true together, may well be false together. It may be that such is the case in the present instance, and that we need decline neither the first question,

* For example, in the 'Narrative of a Visit to the Churches of America,' by Messrs. Reed and Matheson.

whether the intervention of the State, as such, diminishes the aggregate of pecuniary aid to religion, nor the second, whether it contaminates its moral character by extravagance and corruption.

6. Now if it be true that religious worship, upon the whole, is starved among us, is it really owing to the legislative aid which it has received?

In the first place, we should contend that Britain is better supplied with religious ordinances, as far as they are measured by quantity, than the North American republic; and that those countries of the continent where the development of popular principles has not yet been sufficient to cripple the ecclesiastical action of the government, Prussia for example, are more amply supplied than either; the latter a fact hardly, I believe, subjected to question, and of itself apparently conclusive with reference to the objection.

7. Again. It is admitted that individual liberality did once endow the Church sufficiently, at the very least. It is said, Remove State agency, and individual liberality will do the same again. But we are to observe that the same spirit which engendered individual liberality, likewise elicited the contributions of the State. The first has now decreased. It is proposed to remove the second, which grew out of the first and was a part of its increase; but was not its excess, for, on the contrary, the State, as will soon be shown, restrained that excess. It followed the first, however, in the way of natural consequence. And now it is proposed to remove it, in order that the first may grow

again. Is it then so agreeable to reason, that a principle should acquire strength by the utter eradication of a germane principle?

8. But is it then some peculiarity in the English climate or constitution which inverts for us the laws of human nature, and poisons religion in this island by the very diet that sustains it elsewhere? Does the national spirit usually run counter to the tenor of public law, instead of being represented in it? England has been long and honourably distinguished by its pervading, full, and systematic legal provision for the poor: and yet it is not less true that no circumstance in our social condition more excites the admiration (I could name instances) of illustrious foreigners, than the abundance in this country of charitable institutions for the aged, the orphan, the ignorant, the helpless, the diseased, the deranged, which are supported by private and voluntary gifts. The mere statement of such a supposition is its best refutation.

9. I conclude, therefore, that, according to all general rules of prudence and reason, the contributions of the State to religion are really additions to, and not, as has been paradoxically taught, subtractions from, the sum total of those means levied off "the mammon of unrighteousness," which God has appointed and experience has shown to be upon the whole among the instruments for the maintenance and extension of religion. I do not deny that in particular cases these contributions may put a convenient excuse into the mouth of the miser—"why should he be at pains to

do what is done already from other sources?" but all private liberality would have the very same effect. These are exceptions, and not rules. Further, I do not dispute that among sects which are not endowed by the State, the sums which are given in charity will pass in a narrower channel, and will be more specifically appropriated to advancing the objects of the party, while they leave the objects of general benevolence almost without provision; and thus there may be an appearance, in some cases possibly more, of a greater zeal for the temporal service of religion; but though I admit that their sympathies are differently distributed, I deny that, according to our experience, the members of national establishments are upon the whole, when we take into view the entire range of Christian liberality, more scanty givers than the remainder of the community, however true it be that all classes, as classes, are lamentably in arrear of the demands of Christian duty, not to mention Christian gratitude and love.*

10. With respect to the second head of charge, let us observe, that the objections to a state-religion, grounded on the abuses connected with the control of endowments, are not levelled, by those who use them, at endowments in general, but at State endowments in particular. But, upon looking coolly at the ques-

* See the able, heart-stirring, and pungent volume of the Rev. H. W. Wilberforce, entitled 'The Parochial System.' I should also refer to Dr. Wardlaw's 'Lectures on Establishments,' pp. 276—278, an eloquent and powerful passage.

tion, we find that the abuses themselves attach to the practice of endowment in general, not to that of State endowment in particular. Undoubtedly, wherever there is considerable property devoted to a particular purpose, it holds out temptation to worldly men to step in, with a view of enjoying the property and neglecting the purpose. But this temptation exists in full force, whether that property have been so dedicated by an individual or by the State. Rather, indeed, the argument herefrom is in favour of national establishments: because the State has much better means, by its own perpetuity, of securing the permanent administration of its gifts from abuse, and of enforcing responsibility, than the individual who dies and is forgotten, or at least is more uncertainly and feebly represented in his descendants. Upon a general survey, I do not see the slightest ground for maintaining that, of two churches equally endowed, one acknowledged and aided by the State, and the other deriving equivalent revenues from private sources, the latter will, *ceteris paribus*, be more effective as a religious society than the former. If, as an example, we compare the Roman Catholic religion as professed in Ireland with the same religion on the Continent, we are testing the argument at a disadvantage; because in Ireland it is an unendowed as well as an unestablished church; but neither here do I think any inference can be drawn unfavourable to the above positions.

11. Doubtless, it remains to the adversary to contest the expediency of endowment generally, whatever

be its source, and to maintain that the Church ought to live only from day to day; although he would do so in the face of all precept and all practice, with such exceptions only as scarcely break the uniformity of the rule. It is manifest that he would thus get over the temptations afforded by endowment to indolent persons; but it is far from being equally clear that he would exclude a yet more dangerous class, of those, namely, who speak to the passions, and the fancies, and the prepossessions of men, and who not merely neglect, but positively pervert, the truth of God.

12. The notice, however, of this objection, which properly lies, not against establishment but endowment, naturally introduces in this place an argument tending to show that endowment has among its secondary results some which are positively beneficial as well as some that have their hazards. Wherever the pecuniary maintenance of religion and its ministers is not referred to the will of the congregation, a system of appointment other than that of popular election has usually prevailed. Endowment does but ill harmonise with the very nature of sectarianism, inasmuch as it tends to introduce something of independence into the religious institution itself, and liberates it, at least in part, from the dominion of those successive wills which are too apt to revel in its arbitrary control. And besides, it seems at least to be reasonable that the parties who endow, or their representatives, should appoint those who are to receive the fruits of the endowment. I am not here, however, to inquire into the justice of

this principle; but only to observe that history and long experience prove a connection *de facto* between fixed property or stipends for the clergy on the one hand, and what is termed patronage on the other. Although I am not prepared to say that the converse holds equally good, and that, where the sacred order have depended on voluntary and occasional support, there the pastor has always been designated to his office by the flock.

13. The principle of endowment, thus connected in practice with patronage on the one hand, is likewise historically associated with the national or public establishment of religion on the other, to such an extent that, while every religious establishment is *ex vi termini* more or less endowed, no Christian society has ever acquired income or possessions large enough to form an item of any moment in the national wealth, unless when associated with the State; so that endowment leads to establishment as its natural consummation. I do not know that even the Church, before the time of Constantine, can form a substantial exception to the truth of this rule; and wherever an historical connection is found to be nearly universal, we may safely infer the existence of a moral bond. Establishment, then, is connected with endowment, and endowment with patronage. But further, endowment and patronage imply that the minister is, in a considerable degree, independent of the mass of the people.

14. And first of the religious uses of endowment. As having a tendency to give to the minister of religion

some degree of exemption from the arbitrary influence of his congregation, it has also a tendency to preserve the purity of doctrine. Plato deemed it scandalous and at variance with the laws of virtue, to teach for a fee. St. Paul claimed that those who ministered in the Gospel should live by their ministry :* but the vital powers given to the Church enable her to admit many popular influences, which, if she dealt with mere abstractions of philosophy, and not with a living covenant of grace, she would be obliged jealously to exclude. And yet who does not see that the Apostle himself, in writing to his converts, that he had laboured for his own support, because he would not be chargeable unto any of them,† affords an express recognition of that truth for which we here contend, namely, that when the Christian flock are placed habitually in the position of paymasters, notions of pride and self-sufficiency will infallibly associate themselves with that function, and men will claim the right to determine upon the doctrine, for whose inculcation they are continually reminded that they supply the pecuniary means ? Perhaps it was also a similar principle of delicacy in the management of temporalities, which induced the Apostles to commit to the brethren the choice of the persons who were to be ordained deacons,‡ and which led St. Paul to take with him on his journey, to distribute the funds raised for the churches of Palestine, a companion chosen, not by one particular congregation, but by the generality—

* 1 Cor. ix. 14.

† 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

‡ Acts vi. 1.

οὐδὲ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ διὰ πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν
οὐ μόνον δὲ, ἀλλὰ καὶ χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν,
κ. τ. λ.*

15. From this principle, that the purveyor of the pecuniary means is ever apt, rightly or wrongly (in most cases rightly, but in all he is inclined), to become the judge of the work performed, arises the undue dictation of the State, where the clergy are supported by annual and revocable votes, or in any manner depending on the will of the existing secular administration—a dictation which it requires very stringent rules and precautions to prevent. Hence also the tyranny of the people, of the combined many or the wealthy few, where they close or open the purse at pleasure. Hence the blessing of a provision in fixed property, which operates as a part of the permanent law and organisation of the country, and which does not immediately depend, nor is it at all felt to depend, upon the favourable or adverse fluctuations, from time to time, of human will. As the first of these arrangements tends strongly to Erastianism, so the second is calculated to give an unbounded scope to the exercise of private judgment in religion, and to the disregard of all the restraints of authority and of the general reason: and this the more, in proportion as those, who by payment control their instructors, are numerous.

16. This is not a period in which an individual can

* 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19.

contend against numbers, without calling to his aid some auxiliaries, such as custom, authority, prescription. A single patron, therefore, in presenting a clergyman, does not, in general, look for an organ of his own sentiments *as such*, but for one who will convey the principles which are received in his particular religious communion or party; and he relies on the fact of their habitual reception as a counterpoise to any movement which a popular disapprobation at the time may seem to carry. The patron, therefore, does not claim the right of moulding the doctrine which is to be inculcated in the same manner as it is claimed and exercised where the people elect, since numbers have, according to the present sentiment, an intrinsic weight, which the individual has not. Hence patronage becomes a conservative element in religion; and popular election, on the other hand, gives great encouragement to innovation in the matter of teaching; independently of the other results, beneficial or injurious, which have been found to attend each mode of settlement respectively.

17. And indeed, more generally, it seems hardly too much to assume, that, upon the whole, religious truth, of whatever amount, is safer in the hands of teachers than in those of the taught; in those of men who devote their minds specifically to the subject, and accept it in lieu of any worldly profession, than in those of the crowd, who have other objects upon which to bestow their chief energies, and who, for the most part, bestow upon this such a residue only of their

attention as fails to be absorbed by the material wants and interests of life. Not that in the hands of either it is absolutely secure; nor that it can anywhere be pure, except under the safeguards which God has appointed. But such elements or fractional parts of truth as are embodied in any system of religion, will, upon the whole, be better preserved by those most devoted to that system, than by the mass of its nominal adherents. It follows that a considerable degree of freedom in the condition of the clergy from the control of their immediate flocks is advantageous to religion. Doubtless the watchmen require to be watched, and a compound action, of the teachers and the people reciprocally, affords a better guarantee than that of each taken singly would supply: still it remains true, that the voluntary method tends to give a preponderating influence, in determining the doctrine which shall be taught, to the less qualified class; and the method of endowment, and therefore of establishment, which is so much akin to it, verges in the opposite direction. Thus by a chain of causes we find a real connection practically established between the union of Church and State, and that permanency of religious teaching, which is one of the notes and conditions of its purity.

18. If then we are to assume the principle of endowment, is it meant to be seriously alleged that there are fundamental objections to its being put in practice by the State, as introducing lethargy, extravagance, and corruption? that, while private vigilance is able

for itself to secure the efficient management of pecuniary resources, all services which the Government superintends, conducts, or aids, are distinguished by a spirit of inaction, or of wasteful extravagance? On the contrary, it is notorious that the wholesome jealousy of the people, the exposure and free discussion of our public accounts, a comprehensive scale and an extended agency, and the credit that in every well-regulated State attaches to public employments, enable the Government upon the whole to realise, not perhaps everywhere a rigid economy, but a measure of it at least greater than that which the average of private agency would secure.

19. But there is another material distinction: its aid would have one obvious advantage, that it would more nearly conform to a regular and permanent standard, and would be less likely either in an age of superstition to load the priesthood with a corrupting excess of wealth, or in a selfish and worldly period to reduce it to an indecent poverty and dependence. It was the lavish profusion of private persons which, before the Reformation, had placed in the hands of the Church so large a proportion of the landed property of this and of other countries. It has been stated that it actually reached one-third of the whole in England, and one moiety in Scotland. If we admit that the tithe was given by legislative enactment, still it was not the tithe, but the bequests of estates, which caused the enormous temporal aggrandisement of the Church. In the mean time the State was endeavouring with a

wise economy to restrict this practice by enacting and re-enacting the statutes of mortmain. Upon the other hand, the present disposition of the national endowments of religion in Scotland is commonly quoted as a model of economy; and it is certainly entitled to the praise of working great results from very limited means, with as little of evil motive or conduct mingling in their administration, as the infirmity of human nature will allow us under the most favourable circumstances to expect. And yet this most thriftily-ordered system is not the result of any private economy, but of a statute of King Charles the First. Further; not only is this a religious system supported by the State, but it is one in which the government exercises directly a very considerable proportion of the patronage.

20. Upon the other hand, I think experience proves, that it has been reserved for some other than nationally-recognised systems of religion to demonstrate by experiment, upon what scanty supplies of the goods of this world the teachers of religion may be maintained. Independently however of the shame, the scandal, and the sin of refusing the decencies of life to those whom we acknowledge as ministers of the altar, I contend that this excessive fluctuation in the scales of private liberality is itself a most serious misfortune to religious interests; and that the religious action of governments has been beneficial, as upon other grounds so on this; that it has tended to reduce the wealth of the clerical estate in lavish times below exorbitant excess, and

that it now tends to sustain the provision for that body above the level of a miserable penury.*

21. I would further observe, that this opinion of the actual inability of the State to promote the pure designs of religion is one opposed not less to authority than to the results of general reasoning. Endowments of every kind, and of infinite variety in amount and form, have prevailed from the days of Abraham at least until our own, among Pagans and Christians, among members of establishments and dissenters, in sects and in the Church. They have been given by all; but by the best and wisest, more than by the weak and bad. They have been given under the direct sanction and ordinance of God: and it is difficult indeed to reconcile this recorded fact with the novel and extravagant supposition, that they intrinsically tend more to the depression and extinction of religion in the hands of its legitimate ministers, than to its maintenance and its propagation.

* In Wilberforce's Correspondence, Mr. Crosse, a clergyman of Bradford, writes that the dissenters are gaining ground, and "must accomplish the downfall of the Establishment." One of the causes he assigns is the small expense at which they can supply them with ministers:—"Mr. H. here has not, I suppose, above 20*l. per annum*; but then he teaches a school and keeps a shop." See the Correspondence of Dr. Doddridge (vol. i. pp. 217, 257, 296, &c.), who thought himself at Kibworth "passing rich," not "with forty pounds a year," but under it; the Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister; and the Account of the Distribution of the Parliamentary Grant to Protestant Dissenting Ministers, printed for the House of Commons, Sess. 1837, No. 127. It is painful to add, that perhaps the most wretchedly provided of all classes of ministers in the Christian world—at least until within the last three years, during which something has been done to mitigate the evil—were those of the Scottish Episcopal communion. (See Reports of the Scottish Episcopal Church Society.)

22. But further: this opinion is one that has all the marks of an impression received through inward bias and through an accommodation, unconscious I doubt not, but yet not the less real, to outward circumstances. Let us consider who are the parties that declare themselves to repudiate on principle the pecuniary aid of the State to religion. They are, so far as my knowledge goes, a few of the members of the Roman Communion in France, a large number of their fellow-religionists in Ireland, and the majority of the Scottish and English Dissenters. As respects the former, they are so few that they can hardly be termed a class; and the state of things in France is so thoroughly inconformable to nature, that they may have grounds for their opinion there which it would be ridiculous to apply to a more regularly organised society. As respects the two latter classes, we are at once struck by the fact, that the aid which they condemn is to them inaccessible; while it is given, under their very eyes, to schemes of religion which they consider spiritually, in some instances also fiscally, their rivals.* Further: there are in the British Colonies members of the very same bodies. But in Canada, in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and elsewhere, where the assistance of the State is not confined to the pale of a single establishment, these very classes, holding the same discipline and faith, show no repugnance to receive endowments from the State. Most remarkably has this case been illustrated during the year

* Address of the Board of Scottish Dissenters, 1835, p. 9.

1840, when a Bill passed through Parliament, assigning certain proportions of the lands called Clergy Reserves, in the Canadas, for the use of the English and Scottish Church Establishments ; and referring the remaining portion to the disposition of the Governor of the Colony for religious purposes, avowedly and notoriously in order that he might be at liberty to apply it, in obedience to the general desire of the people, to the endowment of Romanism and of Protestant Dissent in various forms ; yet no voice was raised in Parliament, nor in any part of the United Kingdom, to avert this pollution. Am I not, then, justified in saying, when I find that this opinion does not among its own advocates stand the test of experience, that it has evidently been formed under the influence of a ruling though secret bias ?

23. As it has now I trust been shown, that the State is able to contribute at least something to the extension of religion by pecuniary means, the only remaining question to complete its obligation to act is this : whether that something be required ? or is the zeal of individuals at all times, is it in particular under the present circumstances of society, sufficient to secure that the ordinances of religion shall be brought within the reach of every member of the community, and shall fully address their solicitations to his conscience ?

24. Now, of all the parts of this subject, probably none have been so thoroughly wrought out as the insufficiency of what is termed the voluntary principle.

It has been shown that, while a real want, under the circumstances of modern society, ordinarily produces a supply of most things necessary, advantageous, or agreeable to men, and while therefore it is needless to use adventitious means in order to provide any commodity or good for which there is a natural desire, in the case of religion the desire is least when the want is greatest, and those who are most indifferent upon the subject most require to be solicited by the public institutions of religion, not less for the welfare of the State than for the salvation of their own souls. It has also been unanswerably shown, that there are very large portions of the community whose temporal means are insufficient to enable them to bear the expense of religious establishments: and perhaps no one, who looks at the competition for employment in an old and thickly-peopled country, will be of any other opinion than that such inability is likely to continue. And those who are at first merely unable to pay will, if neglected, in no long course of time, add to inability a rooted and inveterate unwillingness.

25. The next step in the argument is, to point to the actual amount of voluntary exertion, and to require from the adversary, as we fairly may, the acknowledgment of its total insufficiency. On this subject no details need be adduced. It is admitted on all hands that the religious provision of our town population is lamentably scanty. The conclusion is yet more inevitable, if we observe the internal workings of all that sectarian machinery which depends upon the

voluntary principle, for we find that its general law is to provide for those who can pay for the provision, but that its whole structure is such as to leave no room for the argument that the agency of government paralyses its exertions; inasmuch as it evidently does not contemplate or tend towards supplying on a large scale the wants of the really poor; it leaves indeed for them a decent margin as a subsidiary appendage, but applies its main efforts merely towards organising a system, of which value received shall be the law, and in which the wine and the milk are to be bought *with* money and *with* price.*

26. Perhaps, however, there has been something of sanguine overstatement by the advocates of establishments, when they have magnified the efficacy of government aid in opposition to the feebleness of isolated and individual exertions. The truth seems to be, that we require both. The tithe system of Europe arose, it can hardly be doubted, not according to either of the extreme opinions which have been held respecting it, but from the combined action of public law and private will. We want in this day a similar concurrence. The assistance of the State should be so given as to stimulate the benevolence of individuals, not to supersede it; as the national personality and responsibilities do not supersede the personality and responsibilities of individuals.

27. The question at issue, then, is not fairly represented, when it is said that it is between what is termed

* Isaiah Iv. 1.

the voluntary principle on the one hand, and an establishment by the State on the other. In truth, it is between the voluntary principle alone on the one hand, and that principle in association with the co-operating principle of an establishment on the other. When the State has done its uttermost there is still ample scope left for the voluntary principle, or individual beneficence, both in the spiritual and in the corporal works of mercy; and that which genuine distress may supplicate, whether for soul or body, is the request of Christ. There is no example of a religious system brought to a condition of repletion by the largesses of the State. In our own times and country at least there is, by common confession, a great void, which neither public nor private exertion has yet filled. While we are told that State contributions have deadened the action of personal generosity, we are quite as free to reply, that it is the stint of right example in the conduct of the State to which we owe it, that single persons have not been effectually reminded of their duty. While it is clear that the State, as a supreme, a permanent, and a pervading power, has means of giving a degree of system and universality to its exertions, which no individual or minor association can command.

28. The objection which has now been considered is held for the most part by those who hold the scheme of what is called Voluntaryism; a term which has gained considerable currency in Scotland, but whose introduction into the controversy of Church and State

has been unfortunate. It tends to confusion rather than elucidation, for it is as inappropriate in its signification as ungainly in its structure. The principle which it designates is of the very life and heart of Christianity, and no one professing obedience to Christ can deny the imperative duty of using the utmost exertions with the freest will for the promotion of His glory in His kingdom. But that which is thus general and elementary has been applied as if it were specific and distinctive: and with excellent reason those to whom the appellation is sometimes given as a term of something like reproach or depreciation, reply,* that they glory in the name. Persons who have thus been compelled or provoked to usurp a designation to which they have no title, do, in fact, hold precisely the same affirmative principle with the advocates of a State religion. That in which they differ from us, that from which they ought to derive their distinctive epithet, if such they need, is their negative principle, the principle by which they forbid that which we would encourage, namely, the participation of the nation collectively in the glorious work of promoting the Gospel.

29. It is natural enough that those, who will admit nothing of the world to be in the Church, should also deny that anything of religion can be in the State. Founding religious societies upon the basis of personal experience, certain classes regard the generality of baptized persons, who do not live according to their

* Wardlaw's Lectures, i. p. 38.

obligations, as actually out of the Church ; and thus regarding the Church as in a separate precinct, and the State as essentially though not nominally heathen, they are consistently led to regard any incorporation of the Church with the State, or of the State with the Church, as an unnatural attempt at the combination of spiritual life with spiritual death. In short, where men hold these two opinions : first, that the Church, which is the body and spouse of Christ, is visible; and, secondly, that it includes not all who are baptised in its communion, but only a certain select number out of them : then it seems to me to be a logical consequence, that they should regard the connection of Church and State as adulterous and accursed, just as we should have regarded it if it had been adjusted, in all its particulars, under Nero or Domitian.

30. But it is one among the strange features of the different forms of human opinion, that the combination of a true proposition with a false one sometimes leads men to a practical error, from which the substitution of another falsehood for the truth they still retain might preserve them. Those described in the former section, together with the false doctrine that the baptism of the Church does not make a member of the Church, have the true doctrine that the Church is properly visible. Hence they say, let there be no union between the Church and the State. Now, if with the first untrue opinion they held a second, that the Church is invisible, then they would be consistent in saying, that though it would be impious, if it were

possible, to unite the Spouse of Christ with the State, a society of which, perhaps, but very few members belong to her, yet there is no impiety, or even impropriety, in uniting the external and, as it were, figurative Church, which is partly of Christians and partly not, with a State similarly composed. Thus, in the particular case, by a double error congruity is attained, and a tendency mischievous in practice is avoided. And the supposition is not wholly imaginary. There are some among us whose opinions correspond to the latter as well as the former of the two classes which have just been described. But the latter class appears to be relaxing, by a parallel process, in both those tenets which I have described as erroneous; and the general mind more and more clearly apprehends, in the Church of England, the positions that the Church is visible, and that those whom she baptizes are Christians bound to obey all the commands of Christ, and therefore furnished with the means of doing so; and if neglecting them, neglecting them at their peril and to their greater and heavier condemnation. So that we may hope, together with a fuller appreciation of the truth of Christianity so far as it respects the Church, her members will likewise attain a deeper and more consistent conviction, that her connection with the State is a fulfilment and not a violation of the Christian obligations of the country.

31. Again, however, it has been largely and forcibly argued, particularly in the Scottish controversy respecting establishments, that the territorial division of

a country is a powerful instrument, or a necessary condition, of maintaining at a *maximum* the social influences of religion. By such a division is meant a distribution into districts of such manageable size that the minister or ministers of religion within each may be held responsible for offering, and therefore may be physically, at least, able to offer, to the whole population, the ordinances of the Church; and where they may stand to avail themselves of the thousand collateral opportunities of access to the heart, and of influence upon conduct, which their admirably favoured position and the innumerable contingencies of life afford. It is contended that such a territorial division as this, or, to call it by its proper appellation, that the reality along with the name of the parochial system, imply almost of necessity the agency of the government. It would be too much, perhaps, to say that such a measure could not be effected except by this means; but there has been no example of it; and I believe it is beyond dispute that it was not until the State had become the auxiliary of the Church, in the period of the Roman empire, that she was able to strike her roots throughout the remote and rural districts, as well as those of dense population, and to give universality to her sway by draining off the whole of the votaries that so long continued to crowd the rival worship of the temples. In this manner, by a moral action she prepared the way for those legal prohibitions of Paganism, which were at length issued by imperial authority.

32. But suppose it to be said, that the effect of the agency of the State by endowments is, in matters of religion, not to convince but to corrupt; is to raise up a host of illegitimate secondary motives of advantage and detriment, to attract men to one scheme and repel them from another, independently of their truth, thus perpetrating a double enormity; that is to say, first, where the truth is received, vitiating its reception by the admixture of inferior motives; and secondly, establishing an authority which is as notoriously capable of being used for the support of falsehood in religion as of orthodoxy. This is, in fact, to take refuge in generalities from the pressure of argument. The answer to such a double-pointed objection is this, that it lies against the entire moral government of God, who has sanctioned the use of secondary motives for drawing the minds of men upward, and who has also filled the world with influences annexed to responsible beings who may use or abuse them, but must answer strictly for their application of the Divine gift. From that liability to abuse with which State power is charged, no human instrumentality is exempt. On the other hand, as respects that admixture of temporal inducements which must enter more or less into the application of our theory to practice, they form a system of instruments sanctioned by revelation within due limits: the influence of this system is not more likely to transgress those limits when the State is the agent, than when it is employed by individuals: its abuse is a thing occasional and collateral, an accident

and not a law of the system, which, like every other, must claim to be judged by its laws and not by its accidents.

33. At this point, however, we are encountered by an objection which is conspicuous among the inventions of the day, an objection of a political rather than a religious cast, and one that seems to form, after all, the staple and the groundwork of the generality of the reasonings, as well as the passions, that are marshalled against the principle of national religion. It is commonly couched in this form ; that governments have no right to apply funds of the State, which are the produce of taxation, to the promotion of religion ; and that in so doing they are actually guilty of malversation and breach of their trust ; because these funds belong to the individuals who have paid the taxes, and not to their rulers. This seems to be unhesitatingly laid down as an universal affirmative proposition. I will, however, state the objection in the words of one of those who advance it. "The individual devotes that which is his own, in the exercise of a natural and inalienable right, to his own ends ; the sovereign, in endowing a particular faith and worship, devotes what is not his own, but his people's, to ends that please himself, without consulting them."*

34. I begin by asking, in what sense it is meant to be asserted, that the funds in the public treasury ar

* Dr. Wardlaw's Lectures on National Church Establishments, levi. p. 251. See also pp. 32, 33, 47. See also the Voluntary System pp. 151, 189.

the property of the tax-payers? Surely it cannot be in a legal sense. They have neither the custody, nor the power to appropriate, nor the power to alienate. But are these funds constitutionally, if not legally, the property of those upon whom they were levied? I know not whether, in any of the conventional constitutions of recent years and generations, there be such a phenomenon as a limitation of the taxing power; but if there be, it has no application to countries which have ancient prescriptive constitutions, as, for instance, England, where deeds such as Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, however important their practical operation, are in their principle purely declaratory, because they purport to state and to guarantee the security of pre-existing and indubitable civil claims, which had formerly been liable at particular times to be questioned, or to be overridden by power. It would be very difficult to argue that the constitutional practice of England gives any sanction even to the doctrine, that the money of the State is strictly the property of the tax-payers, subject to the condition of being administered at the will of their representatives; and this proposition, if proved, would still be very far from satisfying the objectors, who impugn the right of these representatives themselves to dispose of the produce of taxation for the purpose of promoting a national religion.

35. The arrangements of the British constitution appear to have been elaborately and wisely constructed, in the manner least calculated to favour

abstract theories of right, but most likely to avoid all real difficulty and injustice. The members of the House of Commons bear the mixed character of representatives of the people and counsellors of the sovereign. They have the exclusive right of passing money resolutions, and of introducing and altering money bills. But no such resolution can be passed, that is to say, no money can be given by the House of Commons, except upon the motion of the crown, to which the initiative is reserved; and no money bill becomes law unless it receives the assent of the Upper House and of the crown in its legislative capacity. It is true, indeed, that monies are from session to session* made applicable to their specified purposes, on account of the inconvenience resulting from the suspension of funds necessary for the immediate demands of the service of the State, after they have been voted in the Lower House, but before they have been definitively appropriated. This, however, is an arrangement of public convenience, made under an ordinary act of the legislature, not grounded upon any constitutional right or principle; and the power thus conceded, we are to remember, is granted upon conditions which are to be fulfilled, not by the single action of the House of Commons, but by the joint action of the House of Commons and the Crown.

36. Thus, then, the immediate power of granting money is divided between the executive and the popular portion of the legislature; and only by

* By a clause in the Bills of Ways and Means.

annual statutes is the House of Lords, with its own consent, limited in its means of intervention to a subsequent stage. And those who, on behalf of the people, enjoy a portion of this power, are themselves as truly called to act for the Crown and the State in general as for the people themselves. If their power were absolute, and their character were absolute, it might with some colour of plausibility be contended, that by virtue of such exclusive derivation the funds of the State were still in a constitutional, if not in a formally legal, sense, the property of the tax-payers; but, on the contrary, we see that their power is partial, and their character is mixed: they are free to refuse, but not free to give; and their freedom to refuse implies, not that the funds of the State when legally granted, are still the property of the people at large, but that every security ought to be provided on behalf of the people, through the instrumentality of their representatives, against the undue and improvident abstraction or waste of that which is their property until granted, but ceases to be so when granted.

37. Great confusion, over and above all other evils, infallibly arises, when things that have received their determinate form only from positive institution, are attempted to be dealt with as matter of natural and inalienable right. Such is the case with the right of property. Paley, indeed, has pronounced it to be *really* the creature of law;* for it was his habit to seize

* Moral and Political Philosophy, b. iii. ch. iv.

upon some clear, palpable, and proximate idea for the solution of questions, which have a deeper ground in the nature of things ; he is therefore much more perspicuous than true. Were his doctrine unequivocally sound, it would reach far beyond the purpose of my argument; but let us admit, in qualification of his principle, that certain real rights must have arisen out of the original grant by the Creator of the earth and the things appertaining to it.* Yet still those rights only receive their determinate form from civil law, which divides among individuals that which was given to the race, and draws the lines of demarcation which prevent the right of one man from growing into the wrong of another. Undoubtedly the grant to mankind at large implied the necessity of such subsidiary regulations, and therefore, when considered in general, they are under Divine sanction ; but the details of the arrangements are most clearly referable, when considered singly, only to human law as the efficient cause of their existence. How, therefore, can any natural and inalienable right be pleaded to a particular form of that, which only receives its definite palpable existence from positive institution ? How can any such right be termed property, when all property is essentially determinate and precise, and when such a right is essentially indeterminate and vague ? How can a right of *property*, strictly so called, be pleaded against the power from which alone it derives its existence ? There may, indeed, be moral or constitu-

* Gen. i. 26—29 ; ix. 3.

tional obligations, which ought to restrain the legislature in its dealings with property. These, however, are objections, relevant not to the question of the competency of the agent, but to that of the propriety of the act. It is with the former inquiry alone that we are at present dealing.

38. So far, then, it has been argued, that there is no consideration flowing out of the nature of property which, *in limine*, precludes the question whether governors may rightfully apply the funds of the State in the promotion of a national religion; and that, if there be a disqualification of this kind, it must have its origin in some special provision inserted in the contract of government for a particular State. It follows that this can have no application to a country which has no such provision in its contract, much less to one which has no such contract. Both those, therefore, who regard the monarchy of England as paternal, and those who hold it to be founded more properly on an original covenant, should agree that there is no bar of this kind in the case with which we are more immediately concerned.

39. Now, I would submit, that the funds in the State treasury, so far as they are property at all, are the property of the nation ; of course it is meant before they have been specifically appropriated. But the nation is not an aggregation of individuals ; it is a collective body, having an organ to act on its behalf, and empowered and bound to apply these funds for its benefit. To say they are the property of the nation is one thing ; to say they are the property

of the tax-payers is another, and widely different. And this, although the sum of the individual tax-payers may nearly compose the entire nation. Why, then, this distinction ? Firstly, because there is a concealed fallacy in the phrase. It is intended to support the claim of individuals to protest against a particular appropriation of what they call their money. But, in truth, as individuals, in no sense, or shadow of a sense, have they any property in the funds of the State. An individual not only does not possess, cannot appropriate, cannot alienate them ; but further, he has no claim to have them employed for his individual advantage, otherwise than as he may conform to the conditions of the laws, of which conditions the State, and not he, is the judge. Therefore, for this reason do I object to the proposition, that the funds of the State are the property of the payers of taxes ; because it really contemplates them as individuals while seeming to carry all the rights of the nation, and that, regarded in that capacity, they have really nothing approaching to the nature of a property in those funds.

40. In admitting them to be the property of the nation, I may afford to regard the term in its full unrestricted sense, as carrying with it the power of disposal, and not merely the right to receive the use and benefit to arise out of them ; for it will still remain true, and decisive against the objection, that the property of the nation is to be administered by that organ of the nation, which has given to it its determinate character as property, and which has

authority and discretion to decide upon the mode of its application, with no other appeal than such as the constitution has given. It in no way follows from this admission, that the popular will is to be consulted with respect to the appropriation of public funds, further than as that will is expressed through the most authentic medium which the constitution has provided. The tax-payers are entitled to such application of the funds of the nation, not as tax-payers but as subjects. For, under an altered system of revenue, it might happen that the majority of them should pay no taxes whatever, and yet their equitable rights would remain wholly unimpaired.

41. And I believe the common notion, which forms the real groundwork of the proposition I have quoted above from Dr. Wardlaw, is not a formal claim of property in the State funds, but this, that there is an *injustice* on the part of the legislature in such an employment of the monies obtained from individuals, as that which is warranted by the theory of a State religion. That it is hard and unfair to take from the private person what he has industriously earned or lawfully inherited, and to apply it in a manner perhaps independent of, perhaps even opposed to, his positive will.

42. When this plea is advanced, we are entitled to ask the question—if this money was earned by industry, how was that industry made available? How is the exchange of commodities facilitated and adjusted, how is the market of industry kept open, how

are the fruits of industry secured against violence and fraud, but by public law ? If this money was inherited, how is the right of inheritance framed and guaranteed, and its regular courses realised, except by the same public law ? If, therefore, the justice or injustice of the levying of money for the support of religion be placed simply upon this issue, whether the individual has not contributed greater advantages to society at large than he has received from it, and whether, therefore, there can be any residuary balance in favour of the nation, entitling it through its organ to demand and exact somewhat more of the individual, the answer is plain. I admit, indeed, that the tendency of our own economical condition, the rapid growth of commercial and manufacturing, and the relative decrease of agricultural occupations, with the collateral circumstances, must be to diminish the debt of the individual to the great family into which he is born, and to make him regard society, less and less as a mother, more and more as a mistress, or even as a foe. Yet still it remains true, that in every tolerably, nay, every however wretchedly regulated State, the individual is much more a debtor than a creditor to that social constitution in which he has been by nature thrown, and without which he must have been satisfied with ministering to the most imperious necessities of his animal life, and must have held that life itself on a tenure liable at all times to determine through violence or want. The worst of all actual or, humanly speaking, possible govern-

ments appears decidedly preferable to anarchy; and in the same proportions individuals lie under some positive debt to the community.

43. The true condition, under which the State is morally bound to administer the property of the nation, is this: that its disposal be such as, times and circumstances fully considered, is, according to the judgment and conscience of the State, conducive, in the highest attainable degree, to the best interests of the nation. Nothing can be more absurd than the idea, that a right of property remains in individuals after the money has been legally demanded by the State. Nothing can be more untenable than an argument against the competency of the State to demand by law payments for religious purposes, from any notion that it is already a debtor to the individual, and so may not ask anything more from him; or, that it is incompatible with the idea of property. Whatever is for the best interests of the nation as such, is matter for the consideration of the State as such, so far as it is intrinsically and extrinsically qualified. As a State it is, according to the idea of government, competent to entertain every question which has relation to the interests of the nation as such,* and to apply and define its own agency thereupon.

44. It may, however, appear to some as if this were a stringent and arbitrary doctrine, alien to the spirit of free institutions; but a little consideration

* Paley, Moral and Political Philosophy, b. vi. ch. x.

will remove any such idea. Be it remembered, that the intent of those constitutional arrangements which go to establish genuine freedom, is by no means to narrow the scope and impoverish the functions of government, but the reverse. Their immediate purpose is, to give security to life, person, property, and all private rights. And they imply so much of participation in, and control upon, the political action of the State, as is needful for attaining the highest degree of that security. But they pay regard to each of such rights in its due measure. For example, they will take something from the property of a man in order to secure by an efficient judiciary and police his life and person from harm, as well as to ensure to him the peaceable possession of the remainder of that property. And their general and highest purpose is, by guaranteeing negative and material advantages, to leave room, and likewise to give aid, for the positive and superior development of his nature. No one can reasonably contend that, having thus made this subsidiary provision, free institutions are thereby disqualified from filling up the outline they have drawn, from building on the ground which they have cleared; from operating actively, that is to say, in pursuit of any end, to which a State as such is competent, and which is both advantageous to the people, and practicable with regard to the circumstances of the time.

45. In fact, the constitutional question which has been considered, is one that provides its own solution. The will of the people has a certain sphere

prescribed by our constitutional laws for its action. Within that sphere it works freely and energetically; beyond it, a person pretending to sobriety of judgment will, I think, for ordinary purposes, decline to recognise it at all. If he do not so decline, yet how can he ascertain it? Its sphere of direct action on the State, considered extrinsically, is that of voting, which is the privilege of some, and of petition and reasoning, which are the right of all. Its effect in the working of the State, considered as a part thereof, is represented in the decisions of the House of Commons. With respect to one most important point, it is absolute; namely, the refusing to levy money on the subject. All this harmonises entirely with the argument of these pages; but the objection to the principle of State religion, which is now under consideration, is one which does not contend for, but against, the powers of the popular division of the legislature; which does not stand upon its competency to withhold, but upon its incompetency to grant money to certain purposes of the State. If the majority of the representatives think fit to refuse pecuniary supplies for the maintenance of religion, we have no more to say but to acquiesce in the present decision, and to attempt to work upon their minds and upon those of the people whom they represent, in order to bring them to what we think a juster conclusion. But on the other side, it seems actually to be held that the House of Commons is not politically competent to give an affirmative judgment in the matter; that

the bond of social union ought not to include any question of religion ; that, no matter how nearly unanimous the people, the right of the dissentient minority to withhold its support from the religion of the State is sacred ; although upon other subjects the minority, or that which in the scales of the constitution weighs as such, is bound to submit to the will of the majority for one general welfare, and the State is admitted to be the judge what those subjects are. Resistance to the law is palliated and even justified in this point, while it is admitted in others to be criminal.

46. The private person, however, is not disregarded by the Constitution. Entering, through his political privilege or interest, into the mind of the State itself, he contributes in effect his voice, with the weight which may constitutionally belong to it, towards the general decision. But then his right to participate in the formation of the sentence, as it is ascertained, so also it is limited by the privileges which the law allows to him. He has acquitted his conscience when he has used his privilege according to its dictates ; and having discharged his responsibility, it is plain that he has also exhausted his right. Thereafter the State, deciding as its component parts may preponderate, in this direction or in that, must not be charged with breach of faith, or with tyranny, or with the violation of the rights of conscience. The minority in a State is like the rejected alternative in the deliberative decision of an individual man. If every disease which may

have infected a portion of the people is to be not only felt but indulged and fed, to be represented in public acts and functions, tainting, crippling, and debilitating them one after another, then, indeed, the State falls wholly away from its idea, from sustaining and carrying out that national life whereby we are truly incorporated as a political society.

47. In short, this is, in a political sense, a radically disorganising principle, and it threatens, if recognised, to break up all society from its foundations. It implies the right, on the part of individuals, to establish a separate and contrary action to that of the body politic, in matters not of discretion, but where positive obedience is required. No law can stand if such a principle be allowed, and without law there is no society. There is no limit to the scope of this licence. If a few may do it, an individual may do it; and thus there may be any number of distinct and incontestably valid claims to disobey the law. The State requires, as its essential condition, unity of action; and it requires to be itself the judge upon what subjects unity of action shall be enforced; being content sometimes with passive unity, sometimes even with positive diversity. Now there are matters morally beyond the province of the State; but yet it is difficult to limit its legal competency by any definition, which, if it excluded anything, would not exclude too much. Besides, the question is not now whether the State would be right or would be wrong in the active support of national religion; but whether, in the event of its giving such support, that interpretation which

some have recently placed on the rights of conscience be not wholly incompatible with the maintenance of national unity and order. It is proper that those, who may be inclined to countenance such an interpretation, should have this inevitable consequence fully and clearly before them.

48. In sum, the case stands thus. In all ages and countries where the Christian religion has been professed by the body of the nation, without any exception, until the single case of the United States of America in the end of the last century, it has been held in theory, that the State ought to lend its aid for the maintenance and propagation of that religion ; and the theory has been carried out into practice. The State of England still adopts that principle. But now it is held by a considerable body of persons (though a very small minority of the entire nation), that such policy on the part of the State is a violation of the rights of conscience, and therefore wholly unlawful. And many of these persons have actually resisted the law in conformity with this principle ; and in the manner in which it is professed, it generally tends towards that consummation. This is no common discrepancy of opinion, but the deepest of all roots of social discord. The State and the State-religion are involved together. The binding power of the decree of the body upon the individual members is denied : and it is denied in respect of that which other ages and nations, and the majority (by supposition) of our age and nation, have deemed an object of the most sacred obligation and of the highest national importance.

The first result is, a keen, perhaps an almost interminable conflict, with an appeal to all the angriest passions of the human heart. But suppose the minority, still continuing a minority, were to succeed by determined resistance in making it impracticable for the majority to carry their principle into effect. If such were the issue of the struggle, a great positive social result would be realised, besides the negative consequence of the failure of the design to maintain the national religion. It would be this: the principle would have been most conspicuously and authentically affirmed, that against whatever sanction of authority, numbers, or constitutional preponderance, a minority may not only dissent, but disobey. Of course this principle would be applied to other matters and by other parties. Already we see how, with respect to the laws, indifference, having supplanted veneration, is itself merging in dislike, and even hatred. Every body of men, engaged in the pursuit of evil which public authority had been wont to repress, must gain the more hardihood and power in their resistance under such an example. Every element of lawlessness would be called into tenfold activity, when law, in the most sacred subject-matter, proved an empty name. Society having lost its principle of unity, the source of all its moral and even physical energy and life, would remain an inorganic mass, capable only of engendering corruption.

49. I conclude, then, that it is for the Legislature to choose the purposes of public taxation, and to ap-

ply its proceeds for those purposes. Of course, if it should demand of the subject any compliance which is really sinful, and he resist, the guilt of that resistance is on its head. If, however, it inflict hardship upon him without requiring him to commit sin, of course as a Christian he will yield it obedience. The question whether the Legislature has duly or wrongly exercised its prerogative, is one perfectly distinct, and must be determined by the essential rightfulness of its decree, not by any human opinion: but I have wished to show, that the constitutional existence of that prerogative is incontrovertible, and that the recent opinion to the contrary leads, and that by no circuitous process, to the utter demolition of the social fabric.

50. But there are other respects, besides the command of extensive funds, in which the State, as such, appears naturally to possess powerful means of increasing the influence of religion.

The question that naturally suggests itself upon the manifestation of an intention, in the providence of God, for universalising the application of religion, is, what would be the machinery best calculated to carry it out? For obviously, if it could be so truly realised, sin and sorrow are at an end, and the will of God is again enthroned and acknowledged in all the workings of an obedient creation. Obviously, too, its full and permanent effectuation is a difficult, and has hitherto been found an impracticable, task. For how, as long as the mass of men are in juxtaposition with evil as a body, should they fail to be tainted by it? and how

should its elasticity and self-propagation prove, among such materials, less powerful over a congenial disposition than the operation of the antagonist principle over an adverse one ? The Divine Spirit alone could maintain the truth of Christianity in the world from hour to hour. Without Him it would have passed away, like primitive revelation from the greater part of the descendants of Noah. Still, He works with human means. Human means seem insufficient for the whole of his work, even when they have received from Him a capability for advancing it; but never does He fail to use that capability where it exists.

51. Now, when men wish to give to a language every chance of perpetuation, what course do they pursue ? They associate it with public law, with judicial pleading, with the authentic acts of the body politic. As, on the other hand, if the object be its extinction, they studiously exclude it from all these. Not that the adoption of either the one or the other set of measures guarantees the attainment of the end, but they are respectively in the nature of means towards it; and likely to reach it, if it be attainable at all. And so, if the purpose be to perpetuate or abolish a custom, or to imprint permanently, or erase thoroughly, any mark from the face of human character taken in the mass, the same course is pursued. The power of public law, and the moral influence of public authority over men, in respect of their social sympathies, and their sense of honour and shame, as well as grosser motives, are brought to bear as the

probable and prudential means of arriving at the proposed object.

52. And with justice: because the minds of individuals are variable and uncertain; that is, of by much the greater number of individuals. A part of their inclinations set one way, and at a given time prevail: another part set in the opposite direction, and they too have their own season of superiority. But when in some general practice or law, which stands for an expression of sovereign will, corroborated by the testimony of public concurrence, there is embodied a real influence which favours the one and obstructs the other of these drifting tides; this, while it secures for the sympathetic principle free scope and action under its own shelter, likewise stands as a fixed barrier against the antagonist principle in its alternate predominance; so that, for the most part, it is fully able, between two conflicting tendencies, to cast the balance, ultimately and permanently, in favour of that which harmonises with itself.

53. We are all, in a greater or a less degree, the creatures of sympathy, and the general authority of a public law and sanction is a fact that cannot be doubted. It lies deep in our nature, as does the principle of which it is an individual manifestation; namely, that man, gregarious as an animal, is, in a more comprehensive sense, as a being, social. *Quod autem socialem volunt esse vitam sapientis*, says St. Augustine, *multò magis approbamus*. Man is open to the influence of opinion from those around him, and

the more so as the pressure of that opinion is either proximate, or rendered powerful by the number or weight of those who concur in it, or by the form of its expression. Now public law, generally speaking, has all these advantages ; especially if it has, as in the case before us, great antiquity on its side. And I speak designedly of those powers only which it exercises through the medium of opinion, avoiding, as wholly irrelevant to the matter, the physical force which may be exercised in its proper place, but there alone.

54. Not only, however, has public law an advantage in its fixity, for confirming and perpetuating the hold once taken by a principle upon the mind of a people ; but by other means, too, does it operate in the same direction. It operates upon the cold, calculating, and worldly-minded man, who will support a good law to avert the confusion from which he thinks his interest will suffer, as he would support a bad one which appeared likely to have the same effect. It operates upon the timid who are friendly, enabling them to do what, in fact, they wish, without the shame or the sense of affectation, by casting the balance of opinion in their favour. It operates upon men in general through the sentiments of loyalty and patriotism, because whatever is comprehended in the great outlines of the institutions of the country becomes a part of the proper object of those sentiments. It operates even upon the most hostile, not only by arraying substantial strength in favour of what they oppugn, but by showing, under ordinary circumstances, such a

presumable amount of that strength as either to render active proceedings useless, or at least greatly to discourage and retard them.

55. In truth, national organisation is evidently of Divine appointment, as growing out of the primary necessities and impulses of our nature, and tending to its highest developments. Nations are the families into which the human race has what may be termed its primary distribution. The rulers of nations are as the heads of families ; whether the power be less or more restricted, its essence is akin to that of the corresponding station in the smaller society. The power of the rulers and ruling institutions in a nation (and in the division between these two let as large a space as is possible be given to the latter) is as real, over practice and opinion, through the medium of opinion, as is that of parents ; setting aside for the moment, in both cases, all resort to coercive authority.

56. Thus, then, may it be shown, that there is in law and government a capacity to give universality and stability to the effect of great principles in general, which individual agencies, and those of smaller organised bodies, possess in an inferior degree ; and that consequently, under ordinary circumstances, when the latter fail, the former may succeed. But where the former fail, the case seems to be hopeless. It must always be borne in mind, that we are here speaking of principles which do not come self-recommended and acceptable, at first sight, to our natural propensities ; those undoubtedly may maintain them-

selves in individuals without the aid of law; and will even work themselves up through individual minds to such a degree of power as to alter or violently overthrow the law. But if nature be on the whole adverse; if time be required for the operation of the influences which are to counteract that hostility; then, if we cannot universalise and establish a principle by the aid of the law, *& fortiori* we cannot usually expect to do so without it.

57. The application to religion is obvious; it is alien to our natural inclinations, and teaches us to deny them; it comes to our carnal view discredited by (apparently, nay sometimes really) teaching us to part with enjoyments that we have, in the hope of obtaining others that we do not see, and have not yet acquired the capacity to appreciate; it urgently needs all the assistance of authoritative opinion and example, to keep men within the range and reach of that voice of the Church, which conveys the promise of divine grace, and which may mollify and awaken them. But in order to raise a set of prepossessions favourable to religion, in order rather to create influences which may neutralise and repress the prepossessions of a nature unfavourable to religion, we require to bring to bear upon men every secondary instrument which is legitimate in its mode of operation; and the uppermost of all these, that which combines, embodies, and (so to speak) perpetuates the rest, is the influence of fixed law.

58. It is possible also to present the argument for

the permanence of State religion in a lower and more mechanical form, in which, however, it is not wholly unworthy of attention. The very fact that, according to our theory, sacred truths are attested and determined under a double guarantee, has a tendency both to exclude the interpolations of interest and prejudice in their first adoption, and also to defend them against rash and precipitate innovation. The religion of the Church and the State has more stability and power, as a social force, than that which relies upon the word of its peculiar ministers alone. Upon a principle of dualism somewhat similar, the general sentiment of politicians views with favour the constitution of a double as compared with a single, legislative chamber; both in order that projects may be originally subject to examination under a double rather than a single set of motives, and that when they have taken the form of law, it may be less easy to divest them of it.

59. It will, however, be asked by way of objection, how then did Christianity find its way up to thrones, and establish and incorporate itself in systems of law? The answer is this—it arrived at the summits of society by the miraculous impulses of its original propagation, whose vibrations had been measured, no doubt, with reference to the space they were to traverse, and did not exhaust themselves till they had reached the farthest point to which they were destined. The unity and the orthodoxy of the faith subsisted in its greatest moral fulness during that period. But if the vigour of Christianity in its best days

aimed at the places of human authority as affording a vantage ground for the Church, and attained them; and if after attaining them her heavenly powers shall be found in the allotted time too weak to leaven the whole mass, or to secure their own predominance at the summit; then, in their fall from that elevation, the decriers of national religion may indeed obtain a triumph for themselves, but it will be one full of melancholy demonstrations, and yet more melancholy forebodings, regarding the religious condition of the world. And the possibility that it may be in the counsels of God to afford other aids, which we know not of, to His Church in her future needs, neither recommends nor justifies our dispensing with those present instruments which He condescends to employ, and which we are now engaged in considering. So much for the power of law and government, extrinsically considered, to be instrumental in the promulgation of religion.

60. The whole Roman history may be appealed to in proof of the augmented influence which nationality gives to the forms of religion, considered independently of their substantive truth or falsehood. In the midst of the strangest anomalies, we find, from indisputable and indeed universal testimony, these facts: firstly, that in Rome, more than in any other ancient polity, the will and the energies of the individual were subordinated, throughout all ranks, to the State. The oligarchical privileges held by the patricians sufficiently account for their narrower patriotism; but the

conduct of the Roman people, their moderation, disinterestedness, and self-devotion, cannot be similarly explained. Never, probably, was human nature, on a large scale, without the aid of revelation, carried so much out of itself, as by that pervading principle of patriotic honour which filled the ranks of the Roman armies for centuries together with men who had little of their own to defend, and little to sacrifice but life, which to them was much, and which they spent so freely upon the summons of the State in the field of battle.

61. Now combine with this the second and equally unquestionable fact, that in Rome, as we learn from the unsuspected authority of Polybius,* the stamp of public religion was impressed not only upon all the institutions of the State, but upon all the actions of life; and as we thus find the influence of things unseen (under however corrupted forms) simultaneously at a *maximum* in the individual and in the State, we cannot but infer a natural harmony, and a reciprocal causation, between these two parallel manifestations; and by how much the more it may be shown that the religion was impure, and that the influence exercised was not that of truth, by so much the argument for nationality is corroborated, because the results produced must in the same proportion be set down to its credit. It is true that one distinguishing

* VI. 54. Montesquieu, in his *Dissertation sur la Politique des Romains dans la Religion*, has pursued the subject of the "politic use of religion" among the Romans into some detail.

feature of the Roman policy was its joint adoption of all religions that were not mutually aggressive. If we set aside the fact of a revelation, such a course may not deserve blame. When all forms of belief were of human device, there was no sufficient reason why an exclusive preference should be given to one. The doctrine, therefore, of unity in the national religion will not apply to such a case, or rather it assumes a form far less determinate and more apart from visible communion.

62. I am tempted to illustrate the foregoing argument by a passage relating to present circumstances, and extracted from a work at least of such ability, and so much in accordance with the sentiments of a peculiar class, as to have obtained the prize offered in 1838 by the "Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty," for an 'Essay against State Religion.'

"The office of the clergyman is ever an office of influence and honour; that of the dissenter an office of proscription and weakness. The presence of the one is ever expected at the tables of the wealthy, and gratefully welcomed in the cottages of the poor; the presence of the other is generally regarded with coldness and suspicion, excepting among his own people, whose hearts have been won over by the attractive power of his piety and usefulness. The one is 'our respected clergyman'; the other is 'the Methodist parson.' In all schemes of Christian philanthropy, at all meetings for benevolent or religious objects, the

one, if he think it right to attend, fills the first place; the other, as constantly, the second. Even the pious of the neighbourhood warn their families against ‘the seductions of the meeting-house;’ and when they hear, still incredulous, of the devotedness of the minister, hint fears of schism, methodism, delusion. . . The evils of a bad name, and of contracted usefulness, these, therefore, are among the persecutions of the dominant sect. . . . Dissenters do *not* occupy the position in the hearts of the people which from their piety and acquirements they deserve.”*

No allegations can be more relevant to show that in the opinion of the opponents of State religion, the State is not without power to add influence and repute, as well as pecuniary means, to a clergy.

63. It seems, then, to be the height of paradox, unsustained by argument, to say that, as a general rule, the alliance of the government with religion tends to indispose the people to its reception. That must be indeed an ill-ordered State, and one in which those associations have been rudely torn from the popular affections which naturally cling around them, where the sanction of the State does not generally harmonise with, where it is not presumably and *ceteris paribus* a passport to the approbation of the people. There are, indeed, moods in the individual, when passion avenges itself on conscience, by learning to detest and repudiate its dictates simply as such, and the tendency of all vicious conditions is to this

* *The Voluntary System*, by J. Angus, pp. 63, 67.

extreme. It may be thus, or analogously, in societies of men. I have been seriously told, that religious observances declined in Paris during the period of the Restoration through the general unpopularity of the government; but that they have considerably revived since the year 1830, when the State ceased as such to profess a religion. Hence it is that we find French writers of abundant ability, M. l'Abbé La Mennais* and M. de Tocqueville,† treating the dissociation of religion from the State as a practical means of its advancement; additionally incited, it may be, to the adoption of this doctrine by the unseemly and undue dependence in which the ministers of religion are placed, when their provision depends upon the annual votes of the legislature and the presumable fluctuations of the popular will. But nothing could be more absurd, than to found a general rule upon this isolated and clearly exceptional instance. Let us adopt the conclusion, when that natural law of social communion is abolished amongst us, which makes provision for the unity and continuity of the national life, and with this for the fair representation of the permanent national convictions in the public institutions of a country—then, and not till then.

64. It is not necessary to do more than specify, that the ordinary religious action to which governments are thus competent, is an indirect and mediate action. As in the cases of science and art, so in that of reli-

* La Mennais, *Affaires de Rome*, vol. ii. ch. iv.

† De Tocqueville, *Démocr. en Amérique*, vol. ii. ch. ix. p. 234.

gion, which has a science and an art, the State operates upon its members mainly through an instructed and professional instrumentality ; because it is of course morally bound to select that agency which has the greatest degree of competency for the attainment of its ends ; thus, like the mechanical powers, gaining more in effectiveness than it loses in proximity. In this country, for example, the Crown has aided art through the medium of a professional Society, the Royal Academy. So it aids the designs of religion through the Church ; upon the ground of its intrinsic fitness, as rationally regarded, as well as upon the higher and specifically Christian ground that it is the instrument Divinely ordained for the purpose.

65. Having dwelt chiefly in this chapter, with a reference to the circumstances of this country, upon replies to objections, let me now briefly enumerate the modes in which it is possible for the State to lend aid to religion. They are these :

First, by the example of its profession and worship.

Secondly, by the adaptation of its laws to the rules of religion, wherever the same subject-matter is within the view of both.

Thirdly, by the constitutional recognition of a clerical estate as one of the great forces of society, and suitable provision for its action in that capacity.

Fourthly, by supplying the temporal or pecuniary means for the propagation of the national creed.

Fifthly, by repressive measures, such as the laws against blasphemy.

Sixthly, by such general and indirect influences upon the quality of subjective religion, and upon the permanency or purity of sacred institutions, as result from a connection between the Church and the State. I have treated of this action upon religion in general. It may also affect in particular the tone of individual piety, and that subject will now receive a separate consideration.

SECTION II.

**AS TO ITS QUALITY; OR, THE INFLUENCE OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN
THE CHURCH AND THE STATE UPON THE TONE OF PERSONAL RELIGION
IN THE CHURCH.***

66. There is another objection, of the widest scope, to the principle of the national establishment of religion, which relates more immediately to its results upon personal character, and is not dependent upon any peculiarity in the terms under which the Church and the State may in a given case be united, but rather confronts the entire argument, and, if founded in fact, undoubtedly overthrows it; it is this, that union with the State is proved by our own case to be detrimental to the inward life and health of the Church, and to lower the tone of religion in her individual members. If this be false, it is not difficult for the Church to bear the scoffs which are aimed at her in respect of her legal establishment, and patiently to work

* Mrs. H. More has touched upon this question in her 'Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess,' ch. xxxvii.

out anew in herself the destiny of her Divine Founder and living Head, glorification through suffering. But if it be true, then, however apparently complete be the fortifications of external argument, however reasonable or even resistless the antecedent grounds of the connection may appear, the foe is within the walls, and at the rear of the defenders. No abstract argument can stand against the proof (if proof could be given) that a diminished amount or deteriorated quality of personal religion in the aggregate is the result of that alliance, which we have alleged to be not less grounded in the nature and truth of things than affirmed by the general suffrage of mankind. For the evidence of facts must be esteemed a clearer indication of the will of God against it, than any human speculations could afford in its favour.

67. There arise, however, from the circumstances of the day, some influences, which tend to prepossess certain classes of minds in a manner favourable to the objection now before us. Every man will admit that the loss of the temporal endowments of the Church, and of the national homage which is still awarded to her, is, at least, within the bounds of political possibility. And such a prospect, even though to be regarded as remote, still has set many affectionate minds at work to store up topics of comfort as preparatives for acquiescing in such a dispensation, should it be God's will to send it. Looking back to history, as well as inward upon the heart and mental constitution of man, they are glad to recognise, in the case of churches

as well as individuals, the recorded and experienced benefits of affliction, and to find with what literal and palpable truth it is, that "all things work together for good to them that love God." They conceive that the result of the present trials has already been, and that the consequence of protracted and extended trials will be in a still more eminent degree, to produce intelligence, fortitude, and devotedness in the children of the Church. As the temporal advantages which have belonged to her are more and more questioned or curtailed, higher motives will in many minds gradually supersede those which are more sordid. Those who have only known her in her exterior semblance will take refuge from the altered and inclement atmosphere in the inner recesses of her bright and glorious tabernacle; and entering by degrees into the depth, the unity, and the spirituality of her character and scheme, her disciples will be more and more united in heart and soul to their forefathers in the Church of God, and will rejoice in the identity of their hope, love, and life, with those which animated and nursed the primitive and apostolical saints.

68. It is, however, a common, though as I think an unwarranted corollary from these pious and reasonable anticipations, that the overthrow of the Church as an establishment will in natural course advance its interests as a Church ; and therefore, that it exists as an establishment for the benefit of the nation, but purchases that benefit at the expense of a certain portion, perhaps a large one, of its own purity and strength.

69. There can scarcely be any who, upon reflection at least, will not feel shocked and startled at this supposition. The well-being of the Church is surely an object too sacred for compromise or exchange. The value of spiritual truth utterly transcends every other so-called advantage, and none of them are in any way commensurable with it. No political gain can justify our incurring religious detriment. In vain shall we have succeeded in proving that national recognition is able to confer social competency and respectability upon a clergy, to secure external advantages and favourable predispositions for their doctrine, and to afford guarantees of its permanency, if in the mean time it is secretly tainting the inward and vital essence. So it seems as if either we must be bound to surrender the national establishment in virtue and by direct consequence of our love of its inner principles and system, or that a fallacy somewhere lurks in the idea, that the interests of the nation as such have demanded and obtained a sacrifice, however partial, of the interests of the Church as such.

70. Of all trials which wound and lacerate the susceptibility of the heart, perhaps none is so afflictive as a case which appears to be one of contradictory duties. There exists in reality, indeed, no such thing. There is not, there cannot be, reciprocal opposition among the commands of God. All duty has one source in the Eternal Mind, and one direction, for the purposes of love, conceived in that Mind. One duty is never sacrificed to another: but that which in one combina-

tion of circumstances *would be* duty, in another is not duty; some of the conditions necessary to constitute duty have failed; the minor obligation is intercepted, as it were in embryo, and in this sense only is superseded by the major one. But the law which makes it a duty to obey a parent or ruler in all but sin, and the law which makes it a duty to disobey him in sin, are not conflicting laws, nay, they are not even parallel and concurrent laws, but are identical; and the conduct adopted under each is ultimately referable to one and the same ground-work.

71. This is one of the eternal truths which belong to a pure theism, but which readily escape the superficial glances of the human mind. It sinks into retirement and desuetude, and when it is, as it were, exhumed, it comes like a stranger among men, and is questioned as a novelty. But in truth, if we had several duties, we should have several gods: for every proper and original law of action would be the index of a several and independent deity.

72. For every such case, then, as that before us, there must be a real solution; yet the difficulty of finding it may be extreme. But such cases, at all events, will not be held to arise out of the immediate ordinances of God. Social order and government is so evidently and directly by Divine appointment on the one hand; and the good of the Christian Church so manifestly the most palpable object on earth of God's dispensations, upon the other, that an opposition between these two, each so strongly claiming the

highest and most irrefragable authority, upon the bare mention distracts and confounds the heart.

73. It does indeed often happen that, when an authority, given by the Almighty, is perverted in the hands of its earthly steward, one subjected to it may be much perplexed in the endeavour to fix that point in the progress of abuse at which the subsidiary right becomes absolutely annulled, and duty commands him to resort to the original and comprehensive law of God, which cannot be contravened. Thus, supposing a parent enjoins that which is sinful; since his authority is undoubtedly such as to render obligatory what is in itself indifferent, we may find it a serious matter to determine the point at which that binding power loses its validity from being placed in opposition to the general and less determinate, though more authoritative will of the Creator.

74. But in a case where human agency does not intervene at all; where we have recognised the principle of a church-establishment, not indeed as matter of directly and definitely imposed command, but of investigation into fundamental laws, and of conviction therefrom resulting, that its principles were intimately interwoven and its interests uniformly parallel with those of the body politic; in such a case we may surely hope, that any incompatibility or discrepancy which it is attempted to show or to assume, must be a semblance only, and destitute of any foundation whatever, either in theory or in practice. The essential oneness of the Divine will; the manifest conver-

gency of the Divine dispensations; the stamp of concord on all practices or institutions whose origin is from heaven, impress so strong and deep and general a persuasion, as ought to fortify us beforehand in the particular case, against any supposition that the interests of the Church are at variance with those of the Establishment.

75. It would not, however, be wise or warrantable to rest in such a persuasion alone. For two classes it may indeed suffice: those, namely, who cannot or need not inquire further, and those who have inquired thoroughly, and have summed up their thoughts upon the special instance in a full and deliberate ratification of the general principle. But there is much scepticism which cannot and ought not to be thus laid asleep; many minds habituated to half perceptions of truth, and to practical error as their ordinary result; many aroused to honest and unsatisfied inquiry, which may already have glanced at the obvious conclusion, “if the nation should hereafter show a disposition to cast off the church, let it do so at its peril; we will acquiesce, as the church will be the better for it.”

76. To supply the verbal defects, and to unfold the ambiguities of such reasoning as this, is exceedingly important, inasmuch as the defenders of the union between Church and State cannot, until it has been refuted, gird up their loins for the conflict with a clear persuasion of the rightfulness of their object, or without a dim suspicion that it is not only unjust as

regards others, but suicidal as regards themselves, their attachments, and desires.

77. The foundation of the sentiment, which is wont to embody itself in the foregoing argument, has probably been an impression, commonly entertained among the advocates of principles hostile to a legal recognition of religion or of the Church, that a greater degree of religious activity is found to exist within the compass of the unestablished bodies of this country, relatively to their numbers, than partiality itself can allege to pervade the great masses of the Established Church.

78. If the allegation have reference only to *an activity*, and that activity one conversant with religion, we cannot doubt that it is true in point of fact, while we may totally deprecate, and may be prepared to repel, the inferences which have been hastily or inimically drawn from such an admission. In the first place, let us observe, that the term activity applies much more to outward than to inward vitality; and that its application is more readily allowed to that which produces palpable and sudden change, than to causes of simple and regular progression; while yet the power that feeds a tree is more truly generative, and in the end fruitful of greater results, than that which might tear it down.

79. It may appear invidious, but it is necessary, to mark the distinction between the system calculated to produce most activity at a given time, and that which

will most effectually perpetuate its own existence unimpaired in essential points. For there is a common notion or assumption, that these two characteristics are coincident. We need not go far to exemplify the reverse. It may be fairly allowed, that there was, under the later Stuarts, more religious energy, relatively to their numbers, in the congregations of the expelled ministers, than in those of the national Church of England. Many of the former we know were organised and endowed by the zeal of their members, as well as adorned by their piety. What is at this moment the comparative state of the two? The Establishment has arisen from her torpor, she is awake and has put on strength; and in an age august and venerable, she manifests the vigour of the earliest youth:

In età matura
Parimente maturo avea il consiglio
E verdi ancor le forze.*

But those seceding bodies have forgotten the faith for which once they were forward to contend, and almost without an exception have lapsed into Socinianism. Doubtless we have here to consider the Catholicity as well as the legal nationality of the Church; but the illustration may properly serve to impress upon us the necessity of distinguishing permanent from transitory energies.

80. Dissenting bodies naturally act upon the principle of selecting individuals from the mass of the nation, by applying to them the stimulants of reli-

* *Gerusalemme Liberata*, vii. 61.

gious menaces and inducements, and associating them into congregations. The care of the dissenting minister is for a congregation, not a locality; he deals with persons, each of whom is supposed to have more or less a special reason influencing severally his mind and actions, by which alone, and not in consequence of any appointment independent of himself, he has become a member of the flock to which he belongs.

81. How widely different is the case of an establishment! Her ministers are not to act upon this principle of preference, but to offer, and, so far as they are permitted, to administer, the ordinances of religion to every living soul. Not that their attentions are to be divided into shares of a strict equality, but none are to be excluded: while they cherish the best with peculiar fondness, their regards are ever to be directed towards the reclamation of the absolutely profligate, and the retention of the worldly-minded within some at least of the restraints of religion. It is one of the peculiar offices of the Establishment, and often forms, to the minds of superficial observers, the *gravamen* of the charges against her, that she sustains in an outward, and partial, and accommodating religion, a large number of persons who are not animated by its living and life-giving principles. Now this is termed lending encouragement to hypocrisy, and lulling into delusive slumbers the souls of a perishing people.

82. Bring them to an inward religion if possible by love; if not thus, then by the hope of happiness; if not thus, then by the fear of perdition: if again there

be no inward attraction of the soul to God, and they have no principles higher than those of nature, keep them even in the human religion rather than let them be in none: let them attend Christian ordinances from habit, from deference to society or to superiors, from fear of infamy, constantly if they will, or if not, yet frequently, or if not, yet sometimes: the smallest degree of religious observance is better than none at all, however ineffectual for practical purposes be the life within it; because while there is life there is hope. This is the principle and language of a pure establishment, which deems all spiritual life so precious that it would gather and save its very atoms, like the dust of gold, so long as that little which is done is done by the right means and in the right direction—so long as the defects in subjective religion are not derived from any fault in its ordinances or any compromises of its ministers. And such should its practice be.

83. But upon comparing the condition of a country blessed with a church establishment, and not solely dependent for religious ordinances upon the results of voluntary exertions, with that of another bearing the Christian name, but without any such institution, we find the difference to be that, while in both cases there are large numbers professing and cherishing individual religion, in the first a larger proportion of the people observe Christian ordinances, and there are infinite shades of character filling up the wide space between the children of God and of Satan, without

any broad line of discernible demarcation : in the second, to a given amount of religious profession there is a greater amount of religious activity, and there is a more fearful mass of persons wholly cut off from the public profession of the Gospel and the appointed way of immortality.

84. Now when we change the subjects of our comparison, and take the case of our own country alone, we find, I apprehend, that a similar relation obtains between the Establishment and the Sectarian bodies. The former does not cast off the dross of the community, or rather, that which appears dross but contains much pure ore. She attempts and professes to secure a feeble, a partial, and an outward observance of religion, in default of, and she hopes in preparation for, that which is vigorous, complete, and operative with a transforming power upon the inward nature of man. She is content to be encumbered in her course with the inert and lifeless weight of large numbers of persons who are strangers to conscientious and individual religion ; and although she is ever busied in searching among the mass for the capable recipients of a vital principle, and dealing to each man according to his strength, and seeking to extract from each man whatever of religious love and service he is qualified to render, yet such a heavy and unprofitable residue she must always bear upon her, inasmuch as while the good are drafted off one by one into the enjoyment of her loftier discipline, new crowds of the indolent and

the worldly-minded are continually entering within her pale, there, she trusts, to be educated into Christian maturity.

85. She must be contented, however irksome the office, to provide for those whom the dissenting minister cannot attract to his congregation because they do not care enough for religion to contribute to its expenses, as well as those who are precluded by the real pressure of poverty, or by the rarity of population in a particular district, from joining any such voluntary assemblage; and again, for another large and important class who resort to religious observances primarily on the score of deference to public practice and opinion, which practice and opinion is itself generated and maintained chiefly by the influences of an establishment.

86. But granting, as a consequence, that the average religious principle of the members of the Church in England is lower than that of dissenting bodies, it remains obvious in the first place, by general admission, that this circumstance belongs essentially to its condition and office as an establishment: in the second, as we may think, and shall strive to show, it does not imply any compromise between spiritual and political interests, a thing (if the phrase be taken strictly) in its own nature impossible, and whose existence, at least in this particular instance, it will now be attempted to disprove.

87. What, then, can be meant by those interests of a church, which it is said, or felt, or feared, we com-

pound for the sake of state-expediency ? The interests of a church are not the mere attachments of its members to its peculiarities, so far as they are inessential to its existence as a church : if they were, we might yield our point, and admit that the effect of an establishment such as our own should be, to induce a Catholic spirit, and a liberal discrimination between matters necessary and matters indifferent. Discouraging in all things the capricious exercise of individual will, and setting little value upon the authority of mere opinion, its practices have been severely proved, and have acquired their claim to observance in the lapse of generations, so that the full force of our individual self-will and pride is much less brought to bear in exciting our attachment to an established church, than where innovation is easy and perpetual, and each man stands to defend what has been, in a great degree, either produced, or at least subject to modification by, his own personal agency and judgment.

88. The true interests of a church are best to be ascertained by considering its nature. It is an organised body, governed by the laws and ministers of Christ, having the charge of the Word, and the exclusive administration of the Sacraments, and dispensing both for the promotion of a spiritual life. Her end, then, at least her immediate end, is “ the greatest holiness of the greatest number.” Her inanimate machinery has no capability of pleasure and pain ; has no interests in any intelligible sense. Her living members have all one and the same interest : the aggre-

gate of that interest constitutes the interest of the church, and it is the production, not of the greatest possible excitement connected with religion, nor of the greatest possible enjoyment connected with religion, nor of the greatest possible appearance of religion ; nay, not even the greatest possible quantity of actual religion at any time or place ; but the greatest possible permanent and substantial amount of religion within that sphere over which its means of operation extend. By religion, I would be understood to mean conformity to the will of God.

89. Now we, who hold the principle of national establishments, believe, that although a higher average of active religious motive may be found in limited and sectarian bodies, yet this is simply because the Establishment is set and appointed to embrace, along with her more spiritual and intelligent children in Christ, those who are too timid to make a religious profession ; those who hesitate between this world and the next ; those who give a limited and insufficient scope to the action of Christian principle ; those who attend Christian ordinances only in compliance with human opinion ; and those who see nothing in Christianity but a system of outward forms, in an establishment nothing but a method of preserving social order, and of repressing religious extravagance.

90. And it may doubtless be said, that the very constitution of an establishment, as thus represented, indicates an unsound state of things ; that the observance of Christian ordinances ought not to be exacted

by the force of human opinion, but rendered by the spontaneous and joyful action of the heart ; that these false and imperfect services of so many differing classes cannot be satisfactory to God. And unsound, indeed, is the condition of human society ; but the question is, would it not be more unsound were the restraining influences of an establishment withdrawn ?

91. Certainly her faithful members must be content to stand side by side with many who care little for religion. *Simul enim cum iniquis vivimus, sed non una vita est omnium : in occulto dirimimur, in occulto separamur ; quomodo grana in areâ, non quomodo grana in horreo.** But the promises of Christ may secure them from the danger of contagion ; and they may also acquire from their position a livelier remembrance of that lesson, that we may not say one to another, Stand by, for I am holier than thou. I say, the promises of Christ ; for the establishment does but fulfil His prophetic declarations, in not attempting any universal separation of the tares from the wheat ; of the good fish from the bad : content with the laws of her mixed condition upon earth, emulous of the example of her Lord, who ate with publicans and sinners, and generous as her heavenly Father, who sends rain and light upon the just and the unjust, rendering benefit, but not therefore receiving pollution. Not, indeed, that the establishment of the Church necessarily or of right involves that destruction rather than relaxation of dis-

* S. Aug. Exp. in Evang. Joan., Tract xx. ; and see Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Art. ix. (i. 537).

cipline, which at the present day is so much to be deplored in this and in other countries, both where she is established and where she is not. But that which legal establishment does perhaps preclude, is the modern, sectarian, and, as I conceive, unwarrantable principle, of assuming as the original and proper criterion of Church membership, not Christian Baptism, but a distinct personal experience of conversion, unconnected with that sacrament. This assumption, which it may be argued that national establishment hinders or precludes, seems also to be precluded by the doctrines, and inconsistent with the practice, of our Lord.

92. It is undoubtedly well for the State, that the hopes and fears of a future life should be used in aid of those which have reference to temporal prosperity and punishments; that religion should check the ignorant and the irreligious; that men should worship they know not what, rather than not worship at all: but is it ill for the Church? Her principle is, to gather up the very crumbs of devotional offerings; to feed the babes with milk; not to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoking flax, until the Redeemer shall come in His glory, to send forth judgment unto victory. A small obedience is better than none. To think of God seldom, is better than not to think of Him at all. To love Him faintly is better than to be in utter and unvarying indifference or aversion towards the Giver of all good. Better—not as though our acts were strictly and truly good; but because these states of life and feeling indicate a

mental condition less hopelessly inaccessible to the influences of the Spirit of grace, than that of total alienation from the means of grace. Better for the pupil, provided the face be set invariably forwards ; and for the instructress, provided she be always leading and beckoning him in the same direction. The Church lives in the use of means ; and trusts in God for the production of results.

93. Did we, indeed, believe, with the foes of the establishment of the Church, that the natural effect of this operation was to keep these dark worshippers in their darkness, we must all join their ranks, and emulate their zeal for the work of demolition. But, while seeing plainly that the Established Church brings crowds of persons to the outer courts and the lower steps of the temple, we may likewise believe, that she is well calculated to use every effort for their advancement to those which are inner and higher ; and that but for her beneficent agency, they would remain utterly remote from the sights and sounds of worship, from the impressions and associations to which now, by the laws of bare humanity, they are subject, and which, though not universal, nor infallible, nor intrinsically efficacious, yet may be blessed, and often are blessed, and are the natural means and channels of blessing.

94. Is the Church, then, wounded or injured by this charitable operation of the Establishment ? It is sufficiently credible, that her members may be less doatingly enamoured of her lesser distinctive marks, as distinctive marks, than would be the case were she

severed from the State ; and we may admit that their liberality may receive a tinge so far latitudinarian, that they may confound her essential with her unessential peculiarities; or again, there may be those, who regard her human trappings more than the unearthly lineaments which these are intended to adorn. But it is not credible that, except it be from adventitious causes, in no way inseparable from the connection, she has a smaller number of members under the influence of active religion, than, on the other supposition, she would possess. There is no just ground for considering that their Christianity is of an inferior quality because they belong to an establishment ; but, on the contrary, that it is, on the whole, more calm, more catholic, less alloyed by the contagion of spiritual pride and selfishness ; more comprehensive in its views of the manifold functions and capacities of human nature. There is no reason to apprehend, that they suffer detriment from juxtaposition with the less heavenly-minded members of the establishment ; because, though it is written of gratuitous and unordained communion with the kingdom of Satan, that a man cannot touch pitch without being defiled, yet surely no one, recognising the manifest prohibition of our Lord to aim at an entire local separation (as it were) of the hypocrites from the saints in this life, can anticipate for the former any evil from that contact which may occur in the discharge of duty ; and there is in view the animating prospect of their thus arousing many a dormant spirit into holiness, and rescuing many a tender

lamb of the Redeemer from the fangs of the roaring lion.

95. It is true that there may be a certain class of persons, who are alienated from religion simply because it is established ; and who, startled at the apparent paradox of an authority jointly divine and political, may be repelled from the very examination of the Gospel by that *prima facie* incongruity. And though it be true that that paradox is capable of easy explanation, that the divine and the national characters of the Church establishment are capable of real, and generally of easy discrimination, yet this risk, so far as it extends, must be admitted to be in the nature of a sound and fair objection.

96. But the question before us is one of spiritual expediency ; and we must inquire, whether there be not more who will be attracted towards religion by the instrumentality of an establishment as such, than those who will be driven from it. Look to the thousands with whom worship is matter of sheer usage, and unconnected with any active exercise of the mind upon Divine truth. Thus the beneficial action is upon masses. But those whom the *paraphernalia* of a national church, or the bugbear of a law church, frighten from the sanctuary, are units here and there, thinly interspersed through the community. A peculiar tone of character, a singular mixture of intellect and caprice, of philosophical rashness and timidity, can alone account for the rejection of a religion by no means necessarily associated with the State,

because it happens under certain circumstances to be so allied ; and, as this temperament is rare and idiosyncratic in the extreme, so it is entitled to proportionably less weight in our calculations. Not, therefore, to no weight at all : but remote dangers like these are not to preclude a course attended with such large and immediate benefit to the spiritual interests of masses of mankind.

97. In the long-run, and upon a large scale, as I have already had occasion to argue more at length, the prejudice of mankind is in favour of establishments, political as well as religious. The destructive spirit has characterised particular and critical periods ; but, upon a comprehensive average, a tendency to acquiescence in existing institutions is the rule, and a tendency to disturb them the exception.

98. I am prepared, then, to assert it generally of a national Church, that it brings human and secondary motives to bear upon mankind in favour of religion, with a power greater than that which would belong to it, *cæteris paribus*, when unestablished, because ordinarily it would not occupy the same station in public estimation. The fashion which might, in a wealthy and luxurious country, choose to reject attendance at church, is enlisted in its favour. A narrow and feeble provision, no doubt ; but we must not despise the day of small things.

99. And if we are warranted in assuming that the nationality of a church does not diminish the number of its actively devoted members, or its quantity of vital

religion ; so neither has it been often even alleged, that its tendency is to deteriorate what we may term the quality of that piety. As its besetting sin is torpor, so its most natural virtues are calmness and stability ; and that fixedness of institutions, which the addition of nationality tends to give to any religious system, is certainly calculated to impart both a finer and a firmer tone to spiritual character. The abhorrence of mere individual will as such, which properly belongs to the Catholic Church, and which renders her odious or unattractive to turbulent spirits, has a beautiful effect upon the chastened mind, and presents man before God in the attitude which befits him, not as a creator, or an inventor, or even a reproducer, of a system, upon which he shall read Self everywhere or anywhere inscribed, but as a recipient of pure bounty and compassion. The idea of inheritance, with all its at once ennobling and subduing effects, is perfectly realised in that body alone, where we are the heirs, not merely of antiquity, but of inspiration, and where the long line of Christian generations brightens, instead of fading, as it recedes.

100. Now it is necessary to be very cautious in comparing any results of a political institution with those which flow immediately out of God's appointment. The mere adoption and establishment of a religious body by the State does not supply the want of any conditions which are required to constitute the Church. Establishment and dissent present to us one contrast ; catholicity and sectarianism another. But

still, so far as there can be an adumbration of what is palpably divine in systems of church polity constructed, in some at least of their parts, according to human conjecture, we do find that religion, when not authenticated by apostolical descent, does certainly appear under less disadvantage when honestly united with the State, than when presented in the form of mere private association.

101. The Scottish establishment has deprived herself of the episcopal succession, and therein, I cannot but apprehend, of her strongest argument as an establishment against the competing claims of any other religious body; but, if we compare her in respect of evangelical doctrine, or of the general spirit of her members, or of the capacity she has evinced of impressing a definite religious character, and of transmitting it from generation to generation, with other Protestant bodies not having the succession, whether in Germany, or Switzerland, or America, or France (the cases of Denmark and Holland would be less in point), she appears, by the side of each and all, in a light manifestly favourable. And what better reason can be assigned for this remarkable fact, than that, in her case, the idea of a national clerisy, or estate of religion, has certainly been wrought out, upon the whole, with greater accuracy and fidelity than in any of the others which have been named, and the instruction, both of old and young, has been long ago systematically provided for, and solemnly committed to her charge?

102. Habituated to the false or secondary concep-

tions which arise out of our inveterate political sectarianism, we are very apt to look upon the State in an irreverent or careless temper, and to forget that, next to the Church, it exhibits the grandest of all combinations of human beings. It is a venerable idea, in which the supremacy of law as opposed to mere will is asserted, by which the sociality and interdependence of our nature are proclaimed, and the best acts and thoughts are arrested and perpetuated in institutions, and a collective wisdom is made available for individuals, and the individual is humbled and disciplined by being kept in qualified subordination to the mass. The adoption of a moral principle, or scheme, or institution, by the State, is among the most solemn and the most pregnant of human acts : and although it cannot place what it adopts upon a ground higher than its own, any more than water can rise above its level, yet that ground is one of an order having more of natural justice, more of experimentally demonstrated permanence, more of divine authentication, than any other, except the Church, which it feebly though perceptibly imitates ; and certainly much more than that private will, which, sooner or later, finds so much space to wanton in the spirit and practice of dissent; reversing every fundamental law of the universe, and asserting the isolation, and deifying the arbitrary caprice of man.

103. The individual then, adopted into such a national estate of religion, is in a situation of advantage with regard to his inward discipline, as compared with that which he would occupy in a system theologically

similar, but unestablished. Law is the highest of human authorities: thus he is taught to obey and to revere, the essential and first conditions of our well-being. The proportion of the single person to the mass is smaller as the aggregation is more extensive: therefore, and in the same ratio, the spirit of self is more repressed in the nation than it would be in some voluntary association carved out from the larger body.

104. Again: not only is the numerical importance (so to speak) of the individual less in proportion as the society is large, but his temptations to self-sufficiency and pride are likewise liable to be curtailed in proportion as the society is permanent. The more permanent the society, the greater becomes the authority attached to it; the minds of men are predisposed to submission, and the notions of domineering will are in a commensurate degree repressed. Now the State as such is less permanent in its nature than the Church, but more so than any scheme of individual device: and thus again nationality, perpetuating as well as conspicuously exhibiting the body of a public religion, gives it the aid of all the venerable associations which it commands, and affords another emphatic contradiction to the exorbitant pretensions of self-will.

105. While, then, the noblest form of religion, and the authenticated form of Christianity, is presented in the Catholic Church, whether it does or does not occupy the vantage-ground of legal establishment, it yet appears that the instrument next in point of efficacy for the propagation, the perpetuation, and the

custody of religion, is that nationality which, among the uncertain conditions of our human state, embodies what has least of uncertainty.

106. Thus much upon the broad and general question. When we regard more specifically the case of England, where the Church claims catholicity, and realises accordingly the hereditary principle even more perfectly than the State, it may seem incongruous to ascribe to her legal incorporation those beautiful characteristics in her offices of religion which belong more properly to her divinely-written charter. And the more so, because the particular conditions of our nationality have never yet been carefully and permanently adjusted since the reform of religion. I do not now speak of the difficult questions which arise in mixed matter between the Church and the State, but there can surely be no doubt in the mind of any man who has reflected with care and candour on the question, that some powers, most naturally and indefeasibly inherent in the ecclesiastical body, are at present heavily and unduly fettered, either by acts or through omissions of the State. The discipline of this Church appears to require more than executive diligence and wisdom can supply: an efficient reorganisation, and a development of principles which, in the long continuance of lax and vicious practice, have almost escaped from our view. Legal recognition, however, neither according to its idea ought to be, nor in point of fact always has been, adverse to efficiency and vigour in the internal government of

the Church : who, then, will deny, that these great objects are yet attainable, and that we may live to see greater accessions of strength derived from actual experience to the argument of these pages, that the nationality of religion is favourable alike to its quality and its general extension ? Nor will I deny, that even at the present moment the Church derives much of strength not only from the more palpable provisions of the law, but from those ancestral associations of immemorial date, with which she is inseparably bound in the minds of Englishmen.

107. Those who dwell most fondly upon the spiritual prerogatives of the Church, considered as she is Catholic, will, nevertheless, do well to remember, that the promise of perpetuation, which is absolute to the body at large, is, to the members in particular, conditional and contingent. It is, therefore, not too much to say, that the nationality may materially contribute to the permanency, and thus to the general power of any given branch of the Church. Supposing her unjustly robbed of her secular patrimony, it might be that danger would accrue to her from pecuniary dependence ; the necessity of eleemosynary support might preclude her from occupying a position of sufficient dignity and authority towards her own members. Except possibly in such a case as that of Romanism, which so commonly founds its peculiar action upon the spirit, if not literally on the dogma of sheer spiritual slavery, I can scarcely believe that it would, at least in these times, be possible to preclude

the use of undue influence upon a clergy sustained by what is termed the power of the purse; the Church might thus, whether by a slower or more rapid, a direct or indirect process, be starved into heterodoxy.

108. It has now been attempted to take a view of the question of connection between Church and State, which, though very incomplete, inasmuch as it looks to consequences alone, and further, only to a part of the consequences belonging to that union, is nevertheless full of interest, because it touches vital considerations, which are decisive, if determined against us, of the whole matter at issue. For if religion be injured by the national establishment of the Church, it must forthwith and at whatever hazard be disestablished; but if not, we need be little moved by the taunts of those who reproach us with being of a "law Church." The Church in England is a law Church: we rejoice in the fact: but how? Just as by the sovereign's proclamation against vice, the morals of the nation are crown morals. The law in one case, the crown in the other, adopts and attests the truths of God, and does them homage.

109. For we have found the supposition, that religion is secularised by contact with the State, to be fallacious. We have found, that the most devoted piety enjoys in an Established Church a climate not less genial than elsewhere; it might perhaps be said, more so: that in respect of liberal views of smaller peculiarities, and of discouragement to individual egotism, a national Church has, as such, especial advantages for elevating

and purifying personal religion : that she has a great and appropriate work, particularly in exercising a partial dominion over the indifferent and even the ungodly, by bringing to bear upon them, in favour of the gospel, and of their own happiness, a great force of human and secondary motives; and that, from the comparative independence of her position, she is also peculiarly adapted for the permanent conservation of Divine truth. If these things be so, we must get rid of that superficial impression, unfavourable to the nationality of the Church, which arises upon the first view of the very mixed character of her component parts, and must remember that, in containing together the good and the bad, in tolerating the hypocrite while she nourishes the saint, she is fulfilling, for the time of her dispensation, the clear intentions of that Lord whose coming she awaits with joy.

CHAPTER V.

THEORY OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

PART IV.

THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE IN THE CHOICE AND THE DEFENCE OF THE NATIONAL RELIGION.

SECTION I.—AS TO CHOICE.

1. Up to this point, however, I have been regarding the State as the national person simply, in its active unity, in that unity to which all the elements of the public life must be reduced, before it can take effect in a common decision on the part of the whole nation. This activity is of necessity a compound principle in its inward composition, though it ought to be simple and uniform in its development without. A thousand tendencies and powers may sway the deliberations, which finally issue into a resolution opposed to many of those moving forces. It is not therefore enough to have considered the relations of the State as it is extrinsically viewed, of the national person with all its elements equilibrated, and prepared for final decisions through its active will, to religion, under the heads of duty and inducement. We must also regard the State in its narrower sense as the governing body, upon which the various interests of the nation may exercise, as

among ourselves, a twofold influence; first, directly upon the choice of its members, and next, indirectly by the permitted sway of opinion. We must inquire by what law these various and often contending ingredients are to be combined among themselves and a common result obtained; not, indeed, so far as to define with exactness, as a quantity, the degree of influence to be allowed to each, but so far as to determine whether the governing body be indeed presumably qualified and entitled, as a general rule and in the natural course and postures of affairs, to discharge, on the part of the national person, those obligations towards religion which have already been investigated, as well as the other functions of political society; and in the last resort to decide on propositions as they arise according to the criterion which the prevailing colour and form of its own conviction, that is to say, the aggregate of the convictions of its members, may supply. In a word, we have hitherto chiefly treated the question as between the nation and its duties or objects; we must now treat it rather as between the people and their government.

2. If the duty of religious unity were adequately regarded, and its results proportionably realised among us, it would seem little more than a self-evident proposition, that the conscience and mind of the nation, which take effect in the acts of its organ the State, should be charged with the choice of its religion; for ruler and subject would then be at one;

but as it is otherwise, as our witness does not consent together,

*οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡεν ὅμος θρόος, οὐδὲ ια γῆρυς,**

we are met by the embarrassing question, Where a diversity of religious denominations prevail, what is the true criterion by which the State is to determine its religion ?

Thus it is that the sin of division in the communion of Christians is closely followed up by the most intricate of all social perplexities. As we here deal with the State in its narrower sense, we must consider its choice as something separate from the choice of the people ; and it must be inquired, whether the former, as responsible for public order, must submit to the latter, or may seek to modify or direct it ?

3. I propose successively to examine,

1. The intrinsic qualifications of the State to choose the national religion.

2. The means, by which the State ought to sustain and guard from danger the religion of its choice.

4. In speaking of the choice of a religion, I do not mean that it is a matter, in which either the State or the private person can acquit its conscience by the mere act of choosing, or that the choice is arbitrary and not governable by determinate and fixed laws ; but only that in the one case, as in the other, choice (*προαιγεσις*) is a legitimate element in the case ; just

* Il. iv. 437.

as, in speaking of the inducements displayed by different forms of religion, I would not be understood to have overlooked the higher consideration, that there is a society on earth, whose claim imposes a religious obligation, paramount and antecedent to all calculations of relative advantage. We are here to examine, not the objective moral laws of this choice, but those which affect it relatively, as between governors and governed. Again, with regard to the question, Who is to choose the national religion? In the State, as the natural organ of the nation, are evidently concentrated and represented both its intellectual and its moral life. Upon all questions whatever, no permanent act or proceeding is properly the act or proceeding of the nation, except such as has been done or ratified by the State. A very general movement of the people may be presumably national; but it is not demonstratively or determinately such, until it has taken effect in some resolution of public authority. It is something more, then, than this kind of choice for which we have to look.

5. According to the principles which have been laid down in this volume, it is evident that unity of religion is a condition of the highest practicable well-being of the State; that it is an object which the State should endeavour to realise; that when its absolute form can no longer be retained, the nearest approximations to it should be embraced; that in the ordinary course of things, so long as the principle of civil support to religion is recognised, both the State

will be coloured by the religion of the people, and the people will tend to conform to the religion of the State.

6. For where discrepancy exists between the creed of the ruler (by which phrase I mean the ruling body) and of the law on the one hand, and that of the actual people on the other, there are several modes of solution which may avoid the collisions that would naturally ensue. Either the one body may surrender absolutely to the other, or the one body may assimilate unconsciously to the other, or the whole subject-matter in dispute may by the common consent of both parties be abandoned. One of these courses must prevail. If the last is followed, and if the considerations of religion be excluded from the relations between governors and governed, the sovereign element of national life is resigned, and results may be expected to arise which I have considered elsewhere. If the internal discord grows to a crisis, and surrender on one side or the other becomes necessary, physical force is the final arbiter. This latter contingency does not fall within the view of the present argument: but if, as is more commonly the fact, the crisis be adjourned, if the case is trusted to the power of moral assimilation, will the ruling body be attracted towards the people, or the people to the ruling body? The answer must be given with reference to times and circumstances. In earlier stages of society one would not scruple to say that the State was not merely supreme in point of available force, but likewise so decidedly the eye of the body politic, that the latter would certainly walk

according to the light of the former. In modern times this broad line of demarcation has been in many places obliterated or obscured. The State is in some instances much mixed up personally with the people ; in others much subordinated to their influence. Yet it has always an extrinsic action, an action upon them ; and if it be rightly and skilfully constructed, so as to be replenished in due proportion by the several social forces of the country, there is no reason why it should not still have a great and even in some cases a paramount influence, and lead the general mind insensibly towards its own conclusions.

7. Undoubtedly it has been presupposed throughout the whole course of these arguments that, upon any considerable spaces of time, the creed of the sovereign and that of the people must harmonise or tend to harmony ; we must otherwise anticipate one of two disastrous alternatives—either disorder and disruption of the social life, or its declension and moral torpor. I do not dispute that a period may come* when the true profession of Christianity may not preponderate over rival schemes in any given country ; nay, when no one form, whether of truth or error, shall stand palpably distinguished as a social force, and superior to all its rivals. In such a case, probably no one of all the competing systems can possess itself of the vantage ground of government.

Either the extent of religious division in a country, or the positive amount of indifference and unbelief, may

* Paley, Moral Phil., b. vi. ch. x.

stifle and extinguish the religious element in its nationality. The physical force, which existing law has at its command, cannot permanently maintain that which is opposed to the profound, pervading, and permanent convictions of a nation. The State must be the immediate arbiter of the form of the public creed; but the composition of the governing body, and the action of the State, must both be finally determined, with respect to this vital question, by the impulses of those social forces which move and actuate it. Nobility, wealth, learning, genius, active energy, permanency and prescription, public authority, numbers or the simple engine of the human will, and Christian virtue—these are, in various measures, the constituents of power in a body politic; and it is idle, with relation to those principles of political freedom which prevail in modern society, to talk of the moral being of the State as a thing set apart, self-derived, independent, or otherwise than as it is determined by the composition of these forces in a duly organised community. Among these forces, law and the State are themselves an item, but they are no more. Equilibrium must be established by their general result. The preponderance of these forces must fix the form of the national religion.

8. But the State is one of them; and if the remainder are duly and wisely represented in it, it may, as it should, lead the whole. Although there must be, in order to realise a permanent national religion, an ultimate and general coincidence between the doctrinal belief of the ruling body and that of the subjects

at large; and although a prolonged discrepancy is more likely under present circumstances to terminate in the surrender of the disputed points by than to the Government,—yet our phases of transition in this world occupy no small space upon the tract of national history; and it may often happen, at particular points of place and time, either,

- 1, that the convictions of the sovereign or governing body are actually weaker, according to the enumeration of social forces which I have recently made, in the entire body politic, than some competing system; or,
- 2, that, though not actually weaker in the aggregate of their social power, yet they are apparently weaker, because a majority of voices may refuse and resist them; or,
- 3, that, though not actually weaker in the sheer amount of numerical adhesion, yet by reason of the tardy action of those who dislike change, and of the proverbial sedulity of those who desire it, the creed sanctioned by the State may seem to be repudiated by a majority of the people; or,
- 4, that without any just pretension to represent even a numerical superiority, nevertheless a minority dissentient from the State religion may, by restlessness, produce such a feverish irritation throughout the nation as to tempt the governing body to abandon that creed which is the occasion, and is put forward as the cause, of discord.
9. In all those perplexing combinations which I

have just enumerated, the State, represented in the law and in the governing body (both executive and, more especially, legislative), possesses a powerfully assimilating moral influence upon the people; and can do much to relieve itself from its dilemma by giving fair scope to its own qualifications as one of their habitual and appointed guides. This may not indeed be the case where there are no wise constitutional provisions for opening and holding open to the great interests of a country a way into the places of authority and public counsel; but where there is a real unity, a profound and energetic national life, it absolutely requires, as a pre-condition, this facility of circulation, this reciprocating influence between the members and the heart. Without this the State may be a fabric, but is not a growth: it may be elaborated by art, but the deeper wisdom of Nature and Providence disowns it.

10. It was the abuse of some former periods, that no legitimate influences were admitted to pass upwards in the social body: it is the fault of the present day to doubt the correlative truths, that legitimate influences of a moral and a religious description may be exercised by the State upon the people, as well as by the people on the State. Against this I argue that the State, when rightly constituted, is eminently competent by intrinsic as well as extrinsic attributes to lead, and to solicit, the mind of the people; to exercise the function, modified indeed, but yet real, of an instructor and even of a parent; and that the denial of the presump-

tive title of the State, in virtue of these qualifications, to prompt and to advise even the numerical mass of the people, and much more its fractional and minor parts, in the matter of religion, is a manifest prelude both to the general degradation of its functions, and to the dissolution of the social bond.

11. That the State, then, must enact whatever is to take legal effect, it is not required to contend here, nor is it disputed elsewhere. In this technical sense, of course, the State must choose the national religion. The true question is, by what rule should it regulate this function of choice? Now if my arguments be sound, then, in order to a healthful state of society, the conscience of the ruling body should be the measure of the national religion; not only because in rigid theory this is required by the idea of its moral personality, but also because it is presumably nearer to the truth than the average of individual impressions or conclusions.

12. It does not follow from the fact that any given agent possesses the external means of promoting an object, as for example wealth and influence, that therefore universally he ought to set about it, or even to select those who shall set about it, or to lay down rules for their selection, if he have not the internal qualifications of mind which will enable him rightly to discharge that office; but if he have these internal along with those external qualifications, then the evidence is complete, and we read his duty in the simple possession of them, just as we are enabled to

infer the habits of creatures from their structure ; as for example from the specific conformation of the teeth or the digestive organs in man, and in the inferior animals, we learn by what kind of food they were providentially ordained to be supported. Now the true moral right of pre-eminence, as Burke has observed,* essentially resides in talent and virtue, not in a limited but in the largest acceptation of the words ; in talent, having reference to men as well as things, to practice as well as study ; in virtue of a personal kind, or according to a social standard ; but most of all, and with a transcendent sense, in that which flows out of religious principles of God's appointment. These qualities are found to pervade the masses of men in very varying degrees. Wherever there is a tendency towards equalisation of talent and virtue, the relation of governor to governed should become one regulated more by opinion, and less by coercion. But there always has been inequality enough to make it obvious that some men are better fitted to command than others, and therefore that their being in places of authority is a benefit, not merely to themselves, which is a secondary question, but likewise to the community at large.

13. We have seen, then, that there are in governments generally certain external means of a nature calculated for the propagation of religion. We have seen that the mere possession of those external means is not enough to prove the obligation, unless there be

* *Thoughts on the French Revolution.*

in governments intrinsically a competency of character, such as shall enable them to use those means aright and effectually for their purpose. Further, we find that there are dispersed through the mass of the nation men so far endowed with qualifications superior to the average, that they are by nature marked out as empowered to lead in civil society, and to discharge political functions. Now if there be a tendency in the institutions of a country to draw such men to such duties, then surely we find in the governors a competency to choose in matter of religion better than the average of the people will do it for themselves, and, commensurate exactly with that superiority, an obligation to exercise that choice, and, as it were, to advise or predispose the people to accept and follow that religion which the governing body has adopted as the best.

14. I do not say that individual convictions in an opposite direction are to give way to such an influence, or to follow the course of the patronage of the government; but simply this, that if the judgment of the legislature be upon the average better qualified to find and attest the truth in such a matter than that of the people, then, to that very same extent, it is entitled and therefore bound to be the instructor of the people. And I think this may be proved almost from the mouth of the opponent; for he will surely admit that, in a case where the people are wholly uninstructed, and the government emanates from the bosom of a Christian and an enlightened nation, this duty of instruction exists. Now suppose the people advanced

nearer to the government in point of intelligence by one or by several degrees, surely the previous obligation has not therefore terminated. It may have undergone modification in proportion to the growing competency, and, as it were, manhood of the community, in respect of religion ; but it must still exist, and can only cease and determine at the time when the mass of the people is equally well qualified to choose with the government, or at least when the difference between them in point of competency, if any, has become indiscernible ; for by the amount of that difference the nation is a gainer in being reminded, as it were, of the purer faith, and thereby, God willing, called to it. And who shall say that in subject-matter so precious any difference, whose definite reality has been ascertained, can be unimportant ?

15. Now is not every government worthy of its name, and valuable to the people over whom it rules, just in proportion to the degree in which it gives over and entrusts the destinies of the nation to the best and wisest of the mind of the nation ? The dictates of that mind, of the highest abilities, and of the most upright and trustworthy characters which the land can boast, are to be elicited, and by sound and good institutions are elicited, from the recesses of private life, and the best men are to be adorned with pre-eminence and power ;* or if not fitted for administrative duties, still

* This accordingly is commonly assumed to be the case. See, for example, the Speech of Mr. Roebuck in the House of Commons, on the Criminal Law Mitigation Bills, May 19, 1837. "We, Sir, are or

they are watched accurately and heard respectfully, and their views, if not their voices, are made effective in the construction of laws and the direction of policy. Is it meant that this high end is universally, or generally, or anywhere perfectly attained ? No ; but simply this, that every government is good exactly in proportion as it attains thereto ; that if we believe our government to be essentially good, it is because it possesses and exhibits this power, and that in proportion as our institutions attract into the governing body the best wisdom of the nation, they endow it with the capacity, and impose upon it the obligation, so far to choose for the people in matter of religion as to propose to them what it has chosen.

16. If, then, the government be, in this general sense, good, let it have its natural duties and powers at its command ; but what, if not good ? The answer is, that it is no more possible for us to lay down rules for a state of things in which the State is totally without directive capacity and inferior to individuals, than to apply the established formulæ of mathematics to a system in which the laws upon which they rest should be inverted. In considering abstract principles, we argue, and this of necessity, concerning all men and things, upon the supposition that they have, when they are taken for all in all, a tolerable aptitude for the purposes which they are appointed to accomplish : both because man, as such, has from nature such an

ought to be the *elite* of the people of England for mind : we are at the head of the mind of the people of England."

aptitude for secular objects; and because, by Christian grace, there exists a similar aptitude with reference to religion. We follow therefore the legitimate course, in looking first for the true *idée*, or abstract conception of a government, of course with allowance for the evil and the frailty that are in man, and then in examining, whether there be comprised in that *idée* a capacity and a consequent duty on the part of a government to lay down any laws or devote any means for the purposes of religion; in short, to exercise a choice upon religion. So that the principles which have been established in theory, have an obligatory application to States and societies in their ordinary historical or experimental forms, as having a tolerable and relative competency for their functions.

17. I will now endeavour to evolve in their order those considerations which are the efficient causes, and the general measures, of the presumable superiority of the State to the individual, considered as an organ for the choice of a religion.

First, then, I have shown that governments ought to be, and it will hardly be disputed that even from the necessities of their position they actually are, higher in the scale of intelligence than the fluctuating elements of average opinion. Let us distinguish, however, between such opinion, and the stable convictions of a nation, the laws of its character; these I conceive will themselves enter largely into the composition and action of the ruling body, and the differences of sentiment between the governors and the governed will

commonly have reference to matters which, whether true or false, are in a crude inorganic state, and lie in the region of mere opinions.

18. Nor do I mean to hold that the sentence of actual governors has intellectually the conditions of truth beyond that of the wisest among private persons. But this class is small, silent, and retired; and though the truths, which by meditation it elicits, do not die, but grow gradually into power, yet they exercise a very limited influence at the moment, and enter but little into the formation of the popular opinion of the current generation. In many cases they find their way, indeed, from the study of the philosopher into the cabinet of the monarch; from thence they take the form of law, and gradually reconcile and attach the general mind. It was thus with the reformation of religion in England. It was thus with the Hanoverian succession. It was thus with the treaties of commercial reciprocity, from the efforts of Mr. Pitt to that of Mr. Huskisson. It was thus with the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. It has been thus with the Amendment of the Poor Law. I. has been thus with the abolition of slavery; for though, in the latter stages of that career, the popular wish decidedly outran the legislative and the executive bodies, yet it was in the first instance the action of statesmen, orators, and philanthropists, in the legislature, which formed and set in motion the feeling of the people. Intellectually, then, the persons composing the legislature or wielding the sovereign power

are as a general rule superior to those whom they govern.

19. Next, if we regard the ethical character or personal morality of rulers, by which I mean their principles of Christian, and in a minor sense of human virtue, I do not know that it can be fairly taken as inferior to that which upon the whole characterises the mass, notwithstanding the grossly exaggerated statements which have been put forward by writers desirous to limit or degrade their function.*

20. But the great fallacy which it is requisite to expose lies in the assumption that the standard of the moral action of the State is not more elevated than that of the personal morality of governors; whereas, in truth, there are many causes which tend to raise it to a considerably higher level, particularly where, as in England, the principle of publicity so conspicuously pervades the national institutions. An active supervision, and the knowledge that it is in constant wakefulness, the sense of shame, the fear of the consequences of exposure, all these act for the most part beneficially and in aid of inward virtue upon the

* “Would he (Dr. Chalmers) commit the conservation of the nation’s health to men who, instead of having made the healing art their special study, and acquired a thorough acquaintance with its best established principles and most approved practice, had hardly ever opened a medical book, or inspected a single organ of the human frame? With equal reason might he do so, as entrust the interests of religion to the kings and the statesmen of this world. There have been, there are exceptions; but of how many of them has it ever been sadly true, that the religion of the Bible has been of all subjects the one with which they were least conversant!—what religion they have being based on politics, official, not personal.”—Wardlaw’s Lectures, lect. iv. p. 159.

holders of political power, from the statesman down to the elector. The theory of men is acknowledged to be in general above their practice; and therefore it is that the sentiment which we call public opinion (but it is really more) represents to a great degree the defecated mind of the entire community. Further, the generality of men apply their theory of right with a good deal of rigour to their judgments of others, and reserve any occasional relaxations of the judicial tone for the exigencies of their own private practice.* Now, governors are subject to the view and the animadversions of the entire public; and in a polity of balanced powers and of extended popular privilege, they are eyed with a wakeful and wholesome jealousy; their action therefore in the same proportion (and it is a very considerable one) in which it is influenced and controuled by "public opinion," is effectively drawn upwards as respects its morality, and does thus truly, in no small degree, represent the purified and theoretic sense of the community. It follows that, in the same degree, the public practice of governors, that their acts (for I speak not here of their motives) reach to a higher standard than that of the average of individual conduct.

21. This most salutary action, however, upon the

* "Les hommes, fripons en détail, sont en gros de très honnêtes gens; ils aiment la morale; et si je ne traitois pas un sujet si grave, je dirois que cela se voit admirablement bien sur les théâtres; on est sûr de plaire au peuple par les sentimens que la morale avoue, et on est sûr de le choquer par ceux qu'elle réprouve."—Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*, xxv. 2.

State from without by an indeterminate yet powerful sentiment, which is one of the most felicitous characteristics of the political system of England, seems to require as one of its conditions that moral personality, that distinctness of agency and of responsibility in the State, for which it is my whole aim to argue. If we suppose the relations of representative and constituent to become those of agent and principal ; if we suppose the parliament, by annual elections, to be incessantly reconstructed under the impressions of the moment ; if we suppose the deliberative function to degenerate into that of exhibiting, according to the rules of a just arithmetic or algebra, the absolute and relative quantities of popular will—then any moral demarcation between the governed and the governing body becomes unintelligible and impracticable. Why should a sovereign advise the envoy whom he has bound by absolute commands ? Why should a people trust to an indirect and indeterminate action upon those whom, under this hypothesis, it could tie down by words and syllables to give effect with the utmost precision to its inclinations ?

22. It is, however, the topic most material to this part of the argument to insist, that there is in States a higher and more influential element than the personal will of the ministers or the legislators by whom from time to time they may be piloted. That is the best law which leaves least to the breast of the judge. That is the best constitution which enshrines most of what is material to the national well-being in fixed

and traditionary forms, and limits, as far as may be, the residue which is dependent (not in point of competency only, for this all must be, but in point of necessity and of practice) on living flesh and blood. Now, the standard of virtue, to which law and fixed institutions may attain, is certainly, as a general rule, far above the average of the practical conscience of a people. The reasons seem to be such as these:—the existing law, as a body, in a well-ordered realm, has been, for the most part, originally formed by a dispassionate deliberation. It has had, presumably, the benefits of intellectual power to aid in its composition. That process has been carried on under the supervision, more or less, of a wholesome jealousy excited by a general concern, and consequently with a livelier play of the springs of honour and of shame: the influence of immediate interest and of corrupt bias will have less generally prevailed. It has stood the test of generations; it has been viewed from many different points, under many diversities of circumstance, and has proved itself more or less adapted to all. And in the discussion of enactments and the representation of competing interests there is this immense advantage—that the several forces of human selfishness from opposite quarters come into collision, and eliminate or neutralise one another. In proportion to these conditions of moral superiority, is the voice of constitutional law relatively a voice of truth.

23. A deduction is to be made from this calculation of the intrinsic and presumable advantages of law

over recent and private opinion, upon the score that some classes of vicious principle, when they have made their way into law, are more tardily and with more difficulty reached by the processes of correction; but the benefits greatly preponderate over this occasional detriment. For if, upon the whole, it be correct, and none I believe dispute it, that national organisation has been a real and great blessing to man, and has raised him above the level of his individuality, it must be also plain that the laws and institutions, which are to nations what mental habits are to the individual, have upon the whole been nearer to truth than the generality of individual conclusions.

Thus then, upon the whole, a well-ordered State has a greater degree of competency to fix on truth in religion than the private person as such, and according to that degree is able to assist his choice.

24. I am aware that many readers will be apt to stumble at the proposition that qualification or authority, that *πίστις ἡθικὴ*,* under any form, is to be regarded in investigations of which truth is properly the end. They will be apt to exclaim, that authority cannot make a falsehood into a truth, or a truth into anything more than a truth, and that our allegiance is due to what really is true, not to what is told us as being so. But this objection is as wide as the entire range of those Divine dispensations under which we live, and it is connected with a tissue of the most dangerous fallacies. It presumes, either that each man has

* Art. Rhet. I. ii. 3.

an incorrupt and steady perception of truth, or at least that the corruption and instability of the individual faculty are not capable of being in a greater or less degree corrected by subjecting its exercise to extrinsic conditions, which are themselves grounded upon our actual and fallible nature. It overlooks the fact, that God has made it a positive duty incumbent upon us to obey teachers, parents, magistrates, though they are all fallible and sinful like ourselves; and it sets aside the reasonable presumption, sustained both by universal experience and by these expressions of the Divine will, that abstract truth in circulation among men may enjoy upon the whole a greater currency, if the propositions which purport to belong to it be examined with a mixed regard in part to their nature separately considered, and in part to the character and capacity of those who offer them. Were there no corrupt bias of the heart, and were the light of the intellectual eye perfect, this provision would be superfluous. But so long as we are all confessedly defective in both these respects, and are thus defective in very various degrees, we must each, according to the law of common sense, be content to make proper use of results realised by faculties either notoriously or presumptively better than our own; the wisdom of those set over us must be relied on as a substantive presumption of truth; and the general doctrine of authority, as a distinct and legitimate element of credibility, thus rests upon a basis no less comprehensive than that of the intellectual, and likewise of the moral, fault of our nature,

either of which taken alone would suffice for its support.

25. I have next to notice one of the commonest but most superficial and valueless objections to the doctrine of national religion. It is this :—" Surely that cannot be a true theory which teaches that the Socinian State is bound to support Socinianism, that the Mahometan State is bound to support Islamism ; that these may raise funds, of which part may proceed from the labours of Catholic Christians, for the support of their own worship, and that they are bound to do so if their constitutional circumstances enable them." I reply to this objection by asking, what was the sin of Saint Paul in persecuting the Church before his conversion ? He declares himself that he was guilty therein. He believed the Church to be a fiction opposed to divine revelation. Having that belief, was it wrong in him to use all lawful means against it ? His guilt lay in his refusal of the truth, not in the consistency with which he followed out that refusal to its logical consequences. His guilt would have been not less, but greater, if, conceiving the Gospel to be a forgery, he had made no efforts against it.* It is the

* Compare the following passage :—" He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because whatsoever is not of faith is sin : But yet God's mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandment nor against his conscience ; for he is bound to lay aside his error, and be better instructed, till when the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact."—Jer. Taylor, Serm. xxvii. part iii. On the Miracles of the Divine Mercy.

"scene of the sin" which the objector misapprehends. The consequence flows out of a larger premiss: that every man, as a logical being, ought to act in consistency with his principles. May not an individual propagate his belief? Yet, if he be a Mahometan, he must propagate Mahometanism.

26. It is true that the religion of the State may, upon the general principles of national religion, in many cases be far from perfect; but its faultiness will belong to the original process by which the particular view that has given rise to it was attained, not to the obligation of governors as such to uphold it. When we see the professors of a false creed indifferent to its propagation, although we may bless God for the result, we cannot but regard the fact as aggravating the case of the holders of such creed.* The fault lies in the creed, not in the propagation, although it be continued and transmitted through it. It does not arise between the premisses and the conclusion, but we are to look for it in the premisses themselves. It is the fault of the materials, not of the structure; and the way to amend it is, not by repudiating the principle of a national religion, but by endeavouring to recast that religion according to the laws of truth; to change, not its nationality, which is an accident, but its error, which is of the essence. The obligation holds both as to the points of truth which false religions may contain, and with regard to their errors if held as truths, so long as they are thus held.

* Locke's Third Letter on Toleration, chap. i., Works (1824), v. 146.

27. Probable evidence, be it remembered, is binding upon us as well as demonstrative ; nay, it constitutes the greatest portion of the subject-matter of duty ; and thus a dim view of religious truth entails an obligation to follow it as real and valid as that which results from a clear and full comprehension ; as real and valid, although it be true that different degrees of guilt are incurred by the disregard of the one or the other. So, if I find a purse, which I conjecture to belong to my neighbour, I am as truly bound—it is as legitimate a part of my moral duty—to take it to him and ascertain the fact, as it would be at once to restore it if I absolutely knew him to be the owner ; and yet the sin of withholding it would vary according to the degree of probability in the evidence. Now this law holds good as well with regard to partial as to an ambiguous view of truth ; and thus a more limited perception of religion still leaves a case of obligation to profess and promote it, while any substantial proposition continues to be believed : just as, if our apprehension of the Divine will be indistinct and uncertain, we are nevertheless bound to follow it so long as a reasonable balance of probability remains in favour of the reality of our impressions. There is a close analogy between the two cases ; in both there is a fraction or residue of truth, which residue we are bound to obey.

28. Here, however, let us make a distinction. There are men even among us who view religion, and especially State religion, as a deceit intended to tame and

subdue the people. It is to be feared that among Mahometans and other believers in false creeds this is more extensively the case. I do not say that such a class of men are bound to propagate religion : but this I do not scruple to affirm, that, if a Mahometan conscientiously believe his religion to come from God and to teach Divine truth, he must believe that truth to be beneficial, and beneficial beyond all other things, to the soul of man ; and he must, therefore, and ought to desire its extension, and to use for its extension all proper and legitimate means ; and that, if such a Mahometan be a prince, he ought to count among those means the application of whatever influence or funds he may lawfully have at his disposal for such purposes.

29. For example, let us suppose that the truth he holds to be revealed is the unity of God. I say that the sight of this portion of religious truth entails the obligation to pursue it. Nay further : that the errors which he holds along with it are errors which he sees as truths ; that as such he is bound upon his own principles to seek their propagation ; and that, if he does so, the fault lies in the original conception, in the manner by which he came to conviction, and not in the acting upon that conviction, supposing it fully formed : whereas, if he does not so, then he betrays what he believes falsely to be truth, as much as we by the like conduct should betray what we believe truly and know to be truth, and—our view being confined

simply to the fact of convictions of equal strength in similar subject-matter entailing the same obligation upon the individuals entertaining them—the fault in both cases would be the same.

30. It can hardly be required to mention, that the obligations of the State to religion must of course be limited by the subsisting constitution of a country. It is because means of promoting religion naturally accrue to governors, that they are bound to use them for that end: as the individual finds in the fact of his possessing capacities, opportunities, or fortune for doing God service, the obligation to perform that service. But means contrary to the constitution, instead of accruing naturally, would be acquired most unnaturally. A government can only, with propriety, be said to have what statutory or customary and fundamental law may assign it. If an executive organ should venture on an illegal exaction of funds for religious objects—or if a legislative body, contrary to what are termed fundamental laws, should frame an enactment for the purpose, and give it effect by pure power—it would be offering to God what belongs not to itself, but to another; and it would no more be rendering to Him a legitimate or acceptable service, than if a private man should commit robbery and dedicate the proceeds to sacred uses.

31. There are, however, I freely admit, cases in which national association exists only under conventional, and therefore always partial or mutilated, forms;

and in which the State may have lost, or may not seek to gain, or may not yet have gained, but may be on the way to gain, that amplitude of relations to the people, without which it cannot discharge a parental duty. Under cover of these forms of exception I do not seek obliquely to introduce the State of Great Britain. By special compact, indeed, its disorders have been removed, deviations from its constitution rectified, and needful definitions supplied : but it has its foundation upon earlier and far deeper principles. Our nationality is yet entire. And in particular, the national estate of religion embodies, in its present form, the convictions of the numerical majority, as well as the yet greater moral preponderance of the people : and the conclusion for which I argue is, the duty of that majority to uphold it, by the constitutional exercise of their privileges, in its present position.

32. But if we look abroad, we find for example the State of Saxony, where the royal family is of the Roman, the people mainly of the Lutheran communion ; the great State of Prussia, where the royal family and the majority of the people are Lutheran, but where a minority adheres to the Pope. Now this minority is actually predominant in some particular provinces of the realm ; and it was annexed to Prussia by compact simply, and under conditions, of which one was the continuance of the public arrangements that had already been made for the support of the

Roman communion by the State. Government in such a case is less natural than conventional, and cannot discharge all the duties that would appertain to a more comprehensive and ordained relation, as it is hard for a step-mother, however well disposed, to bear the full maternal responsibilities. But the clear obligation of such a government is, gently, yet consistently, to aim at infusing into its regimen vigorous moral elements in proportion as there are *stamina* to bear it.

33. The same general rules may guide us to right conclusions concerning an instance still more peculiar, that of British India, where a small number of persons of a higher civilisation, and professors of revealed religion, exercise in various degrees the powers of government over an immense population, made up not only of individuals but of nations, and professing (with trifling exceptions) various forms of heathenism. With some of these our relations are only mediate; and though we virtually move the springs of their civil administration, it is in part by compact and in part by sufferance. These are for the most part those termed Subsidiary and Tributary States. With respect again to those who are under our more direct ordinary control, we hold the post of power, not as having grown up with them out of the cradle of nations, nor yet in strict propriety by conquest; but rather because British arms have rid them of their former masters, and British authority, in consequence, with the free

will of those whom it has relieved, stands in their place.*

There was no speech that truce to bind,
It was a compact of the mind.†

Here are no relations immemorially subsisting, no vestiges of primitive and patriarchal rule to afford a basis for the structure of government. We rule by opinion and consent; I trust not by force, and that general consent and good will are the actual, as they are the rightful, title of our empire. Reserving there our own freedom, we must agree to be limited in our extrinsic action by the desires of the native race, unless in points which by tacit or express arrangement are given over to our discretion. In such an instance as this, what are the religious obligations of the British government? First, it should seem, to show a Christian example; next, to afford direct countenance or aid to the proffer of Christianity so far as the people are willing to receive it; and lastly, to study the encouragement and enlargement of that willingness. The denial of these obligations to introduce the true guarantee and basis of a moral life into the relations between the British government and the people of India, I conceive to be an error far more pernicious than would even be the attempt to precipitate their discharge. In short, our religious duties in India are

* Edinb. Rev., April, 1839, p. 257. In the first editions of this work the text conveyed a meaning more precise than I intended to give it.

† Rokeby.

those of example and progression. They have met with but very tardy and scanty recognition.*

34. Again ; there may be a state of things—in the United States of America, perhaps in some British colonies, there does actually exist a state of things—in which religious communions are so equally divided, or so variously subdivided, that the government is itself similarly chequered in its religious complexion, and thus internally incapacitated by utter disunion from acting in matters of religion ; or, again, there may be a state in which the members of government may be of one faith or persuasion, the mass of the subjects of another, and hence there may be an external incapacity to act in matters of religion. It has been sufficiently shown that such a case involves dereliction of the true functions and responsibilities of government ; and it is enough, therefore, for the present, to have marked each of these combinations of circumstances as a social defect and calamity.

* Wilberforce's Correspondence, ii. 128, 132, 138, 231, 268, 271, 313, 336, &c. It is satisfactory to state, that the noble design of the Bishop of Calcutta (Wilson), for the erection of a cathedral, has met with the liberal support of the East India Company.

SECTION II.

AS TO DEFENCE.

35. I now proceed to complete the more abstract portion of this inquiry, by considering the objection that the doctrine of union between the Church and the State as a condition of the true national life, and as a result of the law of conscience in the State, tends to disqualification of citizens who are worthy of public charges, and even to persecution for religious belief. I am not however aware that any man has attempted to demonstrate this consequence by serious argument. It has indeed been said, if you may tax, why may you not disqualify by tests? If you may disqualify, why may you not persecute?* As, however, I have distinctly held that the State should aid the Church by all appropriate means, and as coercion is clearly an instrument very commonly appropriate for the employment of the State, I freely admit that the *onus* of showing that the anticipated consequence does not legitimately arise, lies with the defenders of the connection. I shall endeavour first to consider whether the State ought to persecute, whether for the illustration and advancement of religious truth directly and *pro salute animæ*, or in order to avoid the social dangers which religious error generally must produce.

36. With regard to penalties applied to blasphemies, they do not come under the category of persecutions.

* Edinb. Rev., April, 1839, p. 248.

These are punished not as opinions, not as sentiments reached through any sort of intellectual process, but as appeals to gross passion,* which wilfully put aside the common reason and understanding of man, as well as the sense of decency ; they set out with overthrowing the primary laws of his nature, by which he is separated from the brutes, and the character as well as the tendency of this outrage is intolerable to society. Whether such legal penalties be politic or impolitic is a separate question, to be resolved according to circumstances.

37. With regard to coercion, applied to particular religious opinions which have specific consequences hostile to social order, this is altogether a political question ; and such a practice might with entire consistency either be disavowed by a State owning religious obligation, or adopted by one renouncing it. The penalties inflicted on Romanists under Queen Elizabeth, and on the Episcopal Communion of Scotland under George II., are examples of coercion of this kind. At the same time, those who inflict suffering so as to discourage the truth of religion, though they may do it with a distinct design, or *aliud agentes*, have the guilt of persecution. In this, the most proper sense of the term, no one can raise a question concerning its guilt. But, together with all violent opposition offered to the truth in the persons of its professors, there is also according to common use signified under the general name of persecution a sepa-

* Paley, Moral and Political Philosophy, b. v. ch. ix.

rate idea ; namely, all intentional infliction of restraint or pain on account of religious opinion. Restraint or pain, however, which may incidentally and not designedly be consequent upon political enactments, coinciding with a given state of mind in the subject, are not necessarily proofs of persecution. It is the last-named signification alone which is here to be considered.

38. After these explanations upon the meaning of the phrase, I observe that it is erroneous to ascribe as a consequence to the foregoing theory, either—

1. That there need be persecution, or
2. That there ought to be persecution.

The first, because it is not true that the function of the State is universally or of necessity coercive. Any notion of this kind is grounded upon a confusion of different conceptions. A State, indeed, coerces wherever it commands, but not wherever it encourages ; and undoubtedly it sometimes encourages without commanding. The whole function of reward is in the nature of suasion or inducement. Practically the springs of government have been worked in England for a century and a half past in no small degree by the same instruments, under the form of political patronage. The entire system of titles and distinctions, of public thanks, pensions, monuments, and estates, has always been deemed a distinct department of the duties of government. The State may therefore offer as well as enforce, and give as well as impose. Its functions must be coercive so far only as they are prohibitory, that is negative. The other is their nobler side, although

the narrower in quantity of subject-matter. But it is also generally allowed, that a State should promote learning and the fine arts, as powerful engines of civilisation. No man could dream of pursuing such objects by the method of coercion. The State employs national funds to provide galleries, museums, libraries, observatories, and invites the people voluntarily to avail themselves of these advantages. It is true, indeed, that in our own country the sphere of the State's action is limited in this department. But among other and perhaps more imaginative nations, the *kunstleben*, the art-life, is one of the leading elements of our humanity, and the service rendered to it enters largely into the occupations of governments. But such service, whether less or more, appeals only to the free-will and the higher faculties of the subject. I may also quote, by way of further illustration, the aid rendered in this country from the national funds to popular education, an assistance in no way compulsory, yet very acceptable to the general sentiment. And the testimony here borne by opinion in its present state among us is the more remarkable, because it proceeds most freely and largely from those who are either hostile to the national establishment of religion, or lukewarm in its support.

39. Neither, again, is the charge against this theory supported by the circumstance that, according to its tenets, the State is and ought to be a discerner of truth and falsehood in religion. For the Church is far more than the State an executress of that office;

nay, she discharges it with authority.* And yet (excepting with the immediate sanction of the Spirit of God, as in the case of St. Paul's command to the Corinthians†) she has never claimed to exercise the penal functions, unless under very peculiar and partial circumstances, and from savage bigotry. Her doctors have indeed been divided on the question, whether religious error ought to be repressed through civil penalty, under the sentence of any human tribunal; or whether, when incurable, it should be removed, lest it should become to the uninfected a source of corruption; but they seem ever to have taught that at least the matter did not belong to her province,‡ and have referred the whole subject to the civil power.

40. And as there need not, in logical or moral consistency, so neither ought there, according to the principles of this work, to be such a thing as persecution. If we contemplate any ordinary case, if we suppose the tenets in question to be of secondary importance, the proposition seems so clear as not to merit a discussion. When, however, we remember, that there are many truths revealed by God, which we may not admit to be of anything less than primary moment to the soul of man, and when we recollect what the history of many centuries records, the inquiry must not

* Art. xx.

† 1 Cor. v. 5.

‡ Richerius, de Potestate Ecclesiæ, has a chapter entitled, 'Consensus Catholicus Patrum et Doctorum Ecclesiæ, de potestate ministeriali spirituali Ecclesiæ, vacuâ omni potestate cogendi extrinsecè per poenas temporales.'—b. iii. ch. iii. Among his authorities he alleges Tertullian, Athanasius, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, Gregory, Anselm, and Bernard.

be overlooked. I may proceed, then, to suggest, that the State ought not to use coercion for the propagation of religious truth, or for the repression of erroneous opinion, because the employment of force by man upon man is essentially inappropriate for such a purpose. And as the principle of the theory is, that the State should aid religion by appropriate means alone, it follows that it should not employ penal measures for that end.

41. First, then, even the arguments which have been incidentally urged respecting the incompetency of a government to exercise constant and minute supervision over religious opinion, and consequently to enter into relations of co-operation with persons professing particular religious opinions upon the ground of those opinions, seem also to point out that a government exceeds its province when it comes to adapt a scale of punishments to variations in religious opinion, according to their respective degrees of deviation from the established creed. To decline affording countenance to sects, is a single and simple rule. To punish their professors according to the magnitude of their several errors (even were there no other objection), is one to arrive at which the State must assume functions wholly ecclesiastical, and for which it is not intrinsically qualified.*

42. Again, it may be said, that if the government be more competent to choose than the individual, and be consequently both entitled and bound to offer to

* Locke's Third Letter for Toleration, ch. iv.

the individual the result of that choice, the same argument must go to the extent of proving that the government is also bound to force its religion upon the subject, as carrying with it a greater likelihood of truth, and thus a probable advantage to the recipient. The answer is, that it requires much more than such a probability to warrant any human agency in breaking down the natural freedom which God has given to man. I will not indeed argue that this inward liberty is so sacred and indefeasible a right, that of itself it is an insuperable argument against religious coercion. It seems to me to be rather an instrumental than an essential good; to be in truth an absolute condition of our highest well-being, but also to add nearly or quite as much to our guilt and misdeeds when we are inclined to evil, as to our true felicity when we are effectually inclined to good. Abstractedly, it might be for the profit of a resolute unbeliever to be physically punished; much more it might conduce to the welfare of society, that he should be restrained from putting his poison into circulation; but before acting upon this speculative possibility of advantage, we must inquire whether human nature and society possess the means necessary to realise it in practice without the admixture of greater evil. And as the corporal freedom of the subject is the first care of the most excellent constitutions, and as liberty is much more essentially the property of his mind than of his limbs, the well-constituted State will not under

ordinary circumstances supersede his moral agency by restraining it.

43. To solicit and persuade one another are privileges which belong to us all; and the wiser and better man is bound to advise the less wise and good; but he is not only not bound, he is not allowed, speaking generally, to coerce him. There are indeed imaginable degrees of superiority, which might raise a probable argument for coercion, especially where the inferior party is very low in the social scale; but these suppositions are rather exercises for ingenuity, than arguments founded on experience, and suited to the direction of conduct. In general, even a parent would, it is obvious, decline the attempt to force the religion of his child; and the moral authority of the State over the private person, and its responsibility for his full training, are far less determinate. In the same proportion must the circumstances of the case be extraordinary to warrant even the entertainment of such a proposition; that is to say, it lies beyond the range of practical discussion. It is untrue, then, that the same considerations, which bind a government to submit a religion to the free choice of the people, would therefore either demand, or even justify their enforcing its adoption.

44. I have already observed upon the fact that laws and institutions, having it for their object to bring before the people some mental or moral benefit, such as establish, for example, institutes, in order to

the promotion of literature, art, or science, rarely attempt to force upon the subject the advantages they are designed to convey. What is the probable ground-work of this nearly universal rule? Doubtless it may rest in part on the supposition, that there will be found no want of readiness to appreciate, accept, and use the benefits thus tendered; but it seems to have a deeper foundation in the fact that there is an obvious incongruity, felt by the general sense of men, between the notion of force on the one hand, and of advantage or access to the higher faculties on the other. And here, in truth, we come to one of the strongest reasons against religious compulsion. In proportion as we ascend from the lower to the more elevated desires and capacities of mankind, we escape from the region of coercion, and enter upon that of freedom and choice. Our animal life deals with us as with slaves. Our intellectual wants are chiefly felt when a higher stage of refinement has been reached; and yet even they are discernible in an atmosphere where the subtle forms of spiritual beings, which are the objects of our spiritual faculties, would be wholly lost. These are not forced upon our attention: witness the thousands who care not for them. And indeed there is a radical incompatibility in the nature of things, which ought to exempt the domain of religion from the intrusion of force. The service which God requires is the service of the will. The conversion of the will to God is the fundamental change which Christianity aims at producing. The will, by its very essence, by its very definition,

cannot be coerced ; for if his moral conduct be practically brought under the dominion of force, the human being no longer has any real will or inward freedom.

45. In one point of view, however, this argument may still not suffice to preclude religious persecution. For it may be further held, and not wholly without truth, that although coercion cannot produce conviction by its own immediate agency, it may set men about searching into the truth, and so bring them towards conviction, and put them in the way to arrive at it. Here, indeed, the question would incidentally arise, whether in general, and, particularly, whether in the temper of the present day, any such degree and kind of coercion could be used as should not be more than counterbalanced by the reaction it would excite ? But this does not touch the merits : and it is more fairly pleaded that coercion may be available in repressing error, than that it can actively assist the reception of the truth. At least it seems difficult to dispute that, under many possible forms of circumstances, it may have the negative but great merit of checking the dispersion of error, and thereby of preventing minds from being tainted, which might, if it moved freely, come under its influence.

To the argument against persecution from the nature of the faculties conversant with religious inquiry, some may be inclined to add that which has been developed with extraordinary power and learning by Jeremy Taylor in his ‘Liberty of Prophesying,’ from the circumstance, that the evidence must, with

respect to most tenets, fall greatly short of certainty. Questions, however, may be raised, whether, if compulsion be justifiable at all, it may not be vindicated in the case of highly probable, as well as in that of demonstrative propositions. And moreover, the reasoning of this great writer will not cover the whole of my present conclusion, inasmuch as he excepts from toleration "whatsoever is against the foundation of faith."*

46. These reasonings, however, upon the whole, though they may fall short of a demonstrative character, clearly converge to a conclusion in favour of the principles of full toleration. I add yet one more of a similar description. It is derived from the corrupting influence of coercive power in religion upon those who wield it. I will admit that this consideration appears to me to be entitled to great weight. Let it be conceded, that in theory a specious argument may be raised against the total surrender of this power; but I ask, by whom is it to be administered? Were there a tribunal of untainted and seraphic spirits, who would administer penalty for such unbelief or disbelief as implies delinquency, with justice, with wisdom, with sympathy, with sorrow, I allow that the abstract reasoning might be entitled to take a practical form. But are we not warned by the experience of universal history, that the use of this power by man, except when he has acted under the express and known authority of God, has had a deteriorating influence upon those who have

* Works, vol. vii. p. cccciii.

employed it? I am brought, then, to the conclusion that it is an instrument which the Almighty has reserved to His own exclusive control.

47. There are parallel cases: for example, can any thing be more specious than the arguments which may be framed for the ordeal of battle as the arbiter of disputes? for the drama, as a school of morals? for the confessional, as a guarantee of religious purity? And yet I fear it is too clear that all these have, upon the whole, operated unfavourably for the vital reception of Divine truth. The hazard of bringing the lower and animal passions of mankind into immediate contact with an excitement seemingly directed to unselfish and spiritual objects is far too great. The ostensible design is so good that it forms a perfect and impenetrable shelter to the workings of self-deceit, and the passions of demons, covertly insinuated in their sheep's clothing, sit upon the throne of our hearts and are worshipped as God. Let us leave to Him that which is His.

Vidi et crudeles dantem Salmonea poenas
Dum flamas Jovis, et sonitus imitatur Olympi.
* * * * *

Demens! qui nimbus et non imitabile fulmen
Ære et cornipedum cursu simulârat equorum.*

48. There are other topics of great importance connected with this branch of the argument. For example, in periods of intellectual inactivity, men of indolent and worldly minds are ever ready to trust to

* *AEn.* vi. 585.

coercion, provided it be within their reach, for the maintenance of the truth. The sure effect of this is, that they become by degrees indifferent to the purely spiritual weapons of the Church. Then comes an age of mental excitement, when men will not endure the servitude of their fathers; and the class I have described, who usually form the great majority of persecutors, finding that under the altered circumstances the mechanical instrument of coercion has failed them, and never having learned the use of any other, are apt to abandon persecution and all maintenance of determinate belief together. The very motives and dispositions which predispose many to laxity in the present day, and thus endanger the creed of the Church, would have induced the very same persons, had their lot been cast in the twelfth, the fifteenth, or the sixteenth centuries, to concur in the most savage proceedings against innovators in religion. Thus do coercion and the reliance upon it tend to undermine the true moral foundations of the Church of Christ.

49. I apprehend, however, that the determinate and conclusive reason against persecution is this—that the authority to inflict it has not been expressly given to man, and that it is an authority which, except by explicit commission from God, he cannot have. Undoubtedly there are many things uncommanded which are lawful; but there are also some which would not be sufficiently warranted by the general laws of duty, and which are only allowable under express injunction.

It appears to me that when we dispassionately re-

gard the whole subject of persecution, both in its speculative and in its historical forms, we find it to be one in which any contingencies of good are so closely and inextricably mixed up with those of evil, and in which there is so much doubt (on the best supposition) as to the balance between them, that the human understanding can find no warrant for action in the general rules under which we are placed. If indeed there be a direct command of God applying to these entangled problems, such command of itself becomes a guarantee of solution, and supplies us with a chart in a province otherwise trackless and impassable. But if there be no such express injunction, the case falls back into the category of those where to refrain is a duty, and to act a breach of obligation.

Affliction is, as we know, independently of a penal character, an instrument of our most salutary discipline in the hand of our Heavenly Father. Yet men are not allowed to take in hand the scourge for this cause; and if a parent were asked why he had deprived an unoffending son of his livelihood, it would be no sufficient vindication to reply, that he had reduced him to beggary in order that he might learn to trust the more fervently in God.

Saul was condemned for sparing anything in his conquest of the Amalekites; yet, but for the explicit Divine command, would he not have been guilty had he destroyed “Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs?” We take away the lives of harmless animals, and con-

sume their flesh; but it is by the direct permission of God.* Except for this, it would be sinful; and under this it may still be proved sinful to destroy those which are neither noxious when living, nor available for our support when dead.

50. Once more. We have the right to enforce the civil laws of the land, in suitable subject-matter, by pains and penalties, because it is expressly given by Him who has declared that the civil rulers are to† bear the sword for the punishment of evil doers, as well as for the encouragement of them that do well. And so in things spiritual, had it pleased God to give to the Church or to the State this power, to be permanently exercised over their members, or mankind at large, we should have the right to use it; but it does not appear to have been so received, and, consequently, it should not be exercised. As we have seen, the Church appears to have afforded a very general attestation to this truth so far as regards herself, by referring to the civil power, under almost all circumstances, the office of executing the most sanguinary decrees of punishment for offences ecclesiastical. Now the principle of toleration simply affirms for the State what the Church has in practice generally affirmed for herself—an exemption from that painful office, by disclaiming the right to punish in loss of goods, liberty, or life, for error or heresy in religion.

51. I would almost go so far as to say that religious coercion is actually forbidden by the declaration of our

* Gen. ix. 3.

† Rom. xiii. 4.

Saviour—"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."* In this passage our Lord explains why He did not allow force to be employed by His disciples for His defence. On which it is to be observed, first, that the reason given is not one connected with time and circumstance alone, but is laid in the essence of the Christian dispensation; secondly, that if it accounted for the non-employment of defensive weapons, it seems *a fortiori* to preclude their use for offensive purposes. Were the words to be interpreted without reference to the occasion on which they were spoken, they might be, as they have often been, arbitrarily assumed to mean that none of the instruments which this world supplies could lawfully be used for the extension of the kingdom of Christ; but this interpretation is alike opposed to the ordinary tenor of Scripture and to the rudimental rules of common sense; and on general principles also, the occasion of an indeterminate allegation is its best expositor. A similar argument might perhaps be raised from other passages. But we need not rely upon controvertible senses of particular texts. It is quite enough to occupy the purely negative ground that the prerogative of persecution has not been given us, and therefore is not ours.

52. It is not, therefore, because we believe civil rights to be more important than religious doctrines,

* John xviii. 36.

that we would use a power for the defence of the one which we decline to employ for the propagation of the other; although too often some such vicious inference is drawn by persons reasoning ill or not at all, from such a conduct on the part of the State. But it is because God has seen fit to authorise that employment of force in the one case, and not in the other; and because we, as creatures under conditions of fallibility essentially kindred in rulers and in subjects, have no right to administer pains and penalties, either on social or religious pretexts, to our brethren, upon any circuitous inference or conjectural speculation of our own.

53. We have now arrived at the second question proposed. If, then, the State may not persecute for matter of religion, may it notwithstanding disqualify? And first, what is political disqualification? It is not exclusion from all social power, for the unenfranchised multitude has power. The bodiless apprehension of violence, the hold of consumers over those who supply them, the ability to derange the whole industrial operations of a country and its physical life by suspending the action of the strong arm of labour, the mere voice of human solicitation—these are all indirect, yet real and weighty, elements of social power. But disqualification is exclusion from social power in those determinate and current forms which the constitution of a country recognises, and to which it gives legal effect. Social power, reduced under such forms, we may denominate political power. May a State,

then, disqualify for religious opinions not immediately adverse to social order?

54. Now I first observe, that the five first of the arguments * which have been deemed available against persecution, are also arguments, in their degree, against disqualification. For civil function and office is in the nature of a benefit as well as a duty; and to this benefit all members of the body politic have, in equity, a presumable inchoate right, according to their several capacities. Something therefore, namely, that presumable or inchoate right, that fair and equal chance of an actual privilege, is taken from them by civil disabilities. Accordingly disqualification is capable of being represented as, relatively to the individual, in the nature of a penalty, not often perhaps considerable, yet equal in amount to the difference between the burden and the benefit of civil office, with possibly the addition of whatever may, under particular circumstances, be lost by the incapacity suffered in point of general repute. Disqualification is open therefore, in a less degree, to the more general objections against coercion: on the other hand, it does not derive the full advantage of such arguments as tell in favour of the other. It often galls far more than it curbs. It may induce men to dissemble their faith when it has not stringency enough to make them abandon it; but conscience fares worse, perhaps, at least scarcely better, in the former case than in the latter. Persecution commonly will produce a crisis which may result in the

* § 41, 42, 44, 46, 48.

triumph of one of the contending principles, and then the establishment of an equilibrium. But disqualification alienates and embitters by a more tardy process, and, gradually deepening the seat of social discord, engenders contentions, which, if less passionate while they continue, are likewise less powerfully and rapidly borne towards their issue, and consume the heart of society by a slow and wasting fever.

55. And yet, upon the principles of this work, dissent from the national faith is in the nature of a disadvantage for the performance of public functions; for if the State be intrusted with the administration of a Divine authority, its maxims must be determined and its laws moulded according to the revealed will of God: now that revealed will, in the view of the State, is represented by the Church; how, then, should it be a matter of indifference whether those who are to conduct the action of the State, are or are not imbued with the spirit of the Church? And again, yet more specifically, the disqualification of dissidents is in its nature, and so long as it can be maintained with security to the State, in the nature of a bulwark to the direct profession and active support of the national religion; and few will deny that, under some circumstances, it may be lawful for the State to discourage diversities of creed.* It is better, *cæteris paribus*, for the pre-

* "Voici donc le principe fundamental des loix politiques en fait de religion. Quand on est maître de recevoir dans un état une nouvelle religion, ou de ne la pas recevoir, il ne faut pas l'y établir; quand elle y est établie, il faut la tolérer."—Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*, xxv. 10.

servation of that vital spirit, that the influences of the hostile and the lukewarm should be remote, than that they should be proximate. If the personal composition of the governing body be wholly conformable to the Faith of the Church, then the agency of those influences is extrinsic to the State organic, though not to the State diffusive ; but if it be chequered, then the agency has become intrinsic and familiar, and is more likely to take effect in the action of the governing body itself, by which, as in the case of persons, its moral habits must be finally determined. Now it is more practicable, I say, to preserve the religious action of the State entire (and therefore to keep it moral), when dissidents are excluded from the governing body, than when they are admitted into it. Shall the State, then, adopt for its immutable canon the resolution to exclude them ? If so, the inducement which brought it thus far will assuredly conduct it much farther.

56. For, upon the other hand, the arguments for disqualification are of a kind which are not fully satisfied by it, although to a certain degree it meets their purpose. If it be dangerous, that men not possessed of all the conditions of national life (of which the national religion, as has been shown, is one and the highest) should enter into the composition of the governing body, it is also as truly, though less directly, dangerous, that such men should exist in the body of the community, and should make use of those indeterminate yet substantial engines of social power which the unprivileged masses must, whether consciously or un-

consciously, possess. The argument, therefore, would require that, in order to obviate the whole of this danger, expatriation, at the least, should be enforced. And I apprehend that writers, who insist upon "the Test," as the one essential guarantee of national religion, might, by logical antagonists, be forced to admit that their theory was severer than their intentions.

57. For it is evidently more practicable still, to give effect to the principle of national religion when the faith of the nation is uniform, than when dissent is permitted by the law. Shall the State, then, expatriate dissenters? If it does, can it logically stop there? Upon the same principle it might expatriate all profligates, all sinners, that is to say all men; because there is no doubt that not only heresy, not only religious error, but all inward roots of sin whatever, are, in the nature of causes, tending to disable men from realising, so far as their own public agency on behalf of the nation is concerned, the true religious principle and spirit of a national life. Such, then, are the absurd anomalies in which we are finally lost, if, in pursuing a theory, we overlook one of the sets of its conditions. What, then, are the conditions, which are omitted from the above argument?

58. They are those belonging to the truth of political science, and mainly this; that the well-being of a State presupposes and requires its being. Therefore, in order to be capable of realising a spiritual, it must actually have realised an animal life. As all the

beautiful forms of sculpture lie potentially in a block of marble;

Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto,
Ch'un marmo solo in se non circoscriva
Col suo soverchio;*

so do the possible excellencies and glories of the social union dwell in the unhewn corporeal mass of its members—provided it be, indeed, a mass of parts firmly joined together, and not a loose congeries of separate elements. Therefore the efforts to realise a moral and spiritual life of the nation must be met and limited by the preliminary condition of retaining its animal and material life: in more popular phrase, of preserving it from anarchy and desolation.

59. This limiting law of the action of the State, in matter of religion, is not grounded upon the supposition that its external and material life is more precious in itself than the moral and spiritual life; but simply upon the fact, that its attainment of the latter is preconditioned by its possession of the former. Religion is more precious than property; but civil society can for a time better cohere where the government takes no care for religion, than where it makes no provision for the security of property. Hence, as it appears, it is that the Church, in her Litany, prays for “unity, peace, and concord” in “all nations,” before she beseeches “an heart to love and dread Thee, and diligently to live after Thy commandments:” not because public peace is a greater blessing than general

* Rime di M. A. Buonarroti, son. i.

piety, but because it is a condition precedent and necessary to it.

60. Thus to eat, to drink, and to sleep, are functions much lower to the individual man, and much less material to his final happiness, than the worship of God ; yet without the worship of God he may, according to ordinary laws, exist in bodily health ; without eating, drinking, and sleeping, he cannot. That is, the performance of animal functions is more necessary to animal life than the performance of spiritual functions ; and animal life is an absolute condition of all life, and therefore of spiritual life to us, the children of earth, while we remain on earth. And this prolongation of our earthly life is not a process grounded upon servile fear or interested calculation, but a Divine law imposed upon us as a part of our discipline ; a law that, as Plato has so well said,* we should remain at the post where God has placed us, until the same authority, or a necessity imposed by it, shall summon us away. That summons becomes, indeed, articulate and clear, when the choice is between animal life and sin ; yet, even here, many intricate questions of casuistry might be raised ; as, for example, respecting those virgins, who, in the sack of Rome under Alaric, drowned themselves to avoid the violence of ravishers.† But this, I apprehend, is indisputable. If the friend of a believer in Christ should have become a gross profligate and a hardened infidel—if the believer should be engaged in warning and urging him to repent—and if the infidel, maddened by the powerful claims of Truth instead

* Phædo, c. 6.

† S. Aug., de Civ. Dei, i. 17—20

of being melted by her loveliness, should produce a dagger, and exclaim, “ If you persist, I stab myself on the instant,” and should seem to mean what he said,—then, in such a case, the believer would be bound to desist from his task, in order to save the life of his brother, although knowing that that life, so long as it remained without inward change, would be an offensive and an accursed thing in the sight of God ; and only an instrument, unless he should repent, of accumulating, by its prolongation, tenfold of guilt and ultimate suffering upon the head of its possessor. So, then, not only are we prohibited from taking away the life of another for sinfulness, but even in certain cases it may be imperative to desist from an action, otherwise lawful and Christian, lest he should himself abandon it. Thus the animal life, in a moral being, is a state at best purely negative—a state of dereliction of duty, and consequently of evil, in the sight of the Supreme Judge : and yet we must endeavour to maintain it in the individual against death, and, in the State, against anarchy, which is the death of the State.

61. For further illustration, let us now proceed to compare the conditions of the State with those of the Church, after having thus compared them with those of the individual. The Church is an organisation, Divinely charged with the maintenance of the Faith and moral law, and the administration of Sacraments. Were the Church, in this country, for example, wilfully and deliberately to deny the Faith, or to cease to administer Sacraments, it would be no longer a Church. The State, on the other hand, is the or-

ganic body, which acts for, from, and upon the nation : it is a being free and moral by the law of its nature, in which the national life operates centrally, and without which it cannot be fed in individuals, nor their own individual nature effectually cultivated. But this national life is a threefold cord, physical, intellectual, and moral (for which term moral, in the case of Christianity, we should read spiritual) ; and if the State repudiated its higher life, and wilfully and deliberately contravened its moral laws, it would still remain a State, and must still be maintained and obeyed. The State, as such, is logically anterior to Revelation : it is a part of the law of nature ; and, when the law of revelation has been renounced, the law of nature is still binding, and still, at least for a time, may remain.

62. I say, at least for a time. The State must be maintained, even without and against all determinate hope for it as a State, for the sake at least of the individuals who are within it, and whose peace is a sacred charge, for the heart of man is still the sanctuary of his God. But we stand in a probationary dispensation. Social organisation, like corporeal life, is a *δύναμις*, an instrumental power, not having in itself the nature of evil or of good, but both promoting and repressing the nature of evil or of good according to the manner of its use, and ultimately by habit growing into inseparable incorporation with that on which it has been fed. But this is the limit or final goal of its earthly career. As long as that career is in progress, these powers of human nature and society remain essentially neutral, though extrinsically most prolific of good or of evil :

and from this neutrality it follows that each of these powers may be detached from good and given to evil, or may again be detached from evil and applied to the production of good; even as the same arm of strength, in the days of chivalry, would plunder the wealthy and relieve the poor. It is for this contingent capacity, or potentiality, of good, that they are spared during their appointed time, like the fig-tree,* in the hope of a future fruitage. But the day must come “when the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.”†

63. If, then, there be cases where the State has not yet a full moral life, but still tends and struggles towards its attainment, such a State has the promise of well-being. If there be cases where the State has once possessed that inestimable treasure, and has lost or is losing it, the condition of that State is indeed, and perhaps most of all, to be deplored: it has the double blame ascribed by Sthenelaias‡ to the Athenian rule, that, from having been substantively a good, it had passed through zero and then had become substantively an evil. If there be cases where the State neither has nor seeks a moral life, and yet years seem to pass and retribution to linger, let it be inquired whether it be not the very abundance of God's bounty in the provision of animal sustenance, of soil, of climate, of rivers, of mechanical power, of mineral stores, which, satiating for the time the human appetites, lulls into repose the fiery elements of disorder. Let it

* Luke xiii. 6—9.

† Matt. iii. 10.

‡ Thuc. i. 86.

then be seriously inquired, what will be the probable course of events, when the multiplication of numbers shall have overtaken the resources of Nature.

*ἀμέραι δ' ἐπιλοιποι
μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι.**

If there be growths of high excellence in countries so circumstanced, let it be examined whether they spring out of its prevailing institutions, or whether they owe their existence to some distinct and even antagonist influence; even as Athens was fertile of great and good men, who were almost invariably ill affected to her democratic polity. Let us now gradually contract our path until it tends to the single point which has been proposed for present inquiry, namely, political disqualification.

64. According to the foregoing principles, are the conditions of the spiritual element of national life, or any of them, to be maintained forcibly by a State? I do not mean against the fancies of this or that individual, but in cases that hazard its own social dissolution? So far as this question admits of a general answer, it must be in the negative. We may here again recur to the text—" My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence."† Was that, which our Saviour here, as it appears, disclaimed, the doctrine, that even the objective truth of religion should be defended by force against constituted

* Pindar, Ol. i. 53.

† St. John xviii. 36.

authority? Defended of course it may and must be by inobedience or moral resistance, by refusal to act upon unlawful commands. But when we come to questions such as this, we find ourselves entangled in a maze of considerations that seem scarcely to be threaded by any such general rules as human wisdom has been able to enunciate. Is an authority transgressing its legal limits a constituted authority? I suppose then a weak tyrant whom a breath will dethrone, an oppressor of religious truth, like James the Second, on the one hand; on the other, co-ordinately constituted though inferior authorities, holding by truth and by one another, and assured, humanly speaking, of their possession of the means to remove him. In such a case there seems no great difficulty in saying that it may be done. But if we suppose the latter weak, and, though certain of the tyrant's offences against the truth, yet not certain that the social forces are so set against him that they may be exercised without hazard of anarchy; here is a difficult case, a case for cool and masculine understandings, for reverent and tender hearts, for profound supplications to God when it may arise, and one to which I can only apply an indeterminate proposition. Although it has pleased God to supply both private and political life with a better ordinary criterion of duty than the calculation of results, yet there are undoubtedly painful and difficult passages in both, in which the lineaments of abstract right are so obscured by intermediate objects, that Faith herself must be content, conscious of the heaviest responsibility, to guide her steps by an estimate of consequences, never

indeed in contravention of right, yet as affording the best clue to it.

65. Before entering further into this part of the discussion, I would remark that as responsible beings we are not wholly dependent on its issue. These occasions are rare, and need not dwell much upon the mind of the individual. It is not difficult to see that the general rule of private duty is simple obedience. If there be enactments which, as the private person thinks, make him instrumental in promoting evil, let him use the powers which the constitution allows him for their removal. Then he will have discharged his own conscience before God, and he may walk at peace with a quiet mind. He is only to use force against being made to sin; he sins not by suffering what the law requires. Therefore, if I be persuaded that a given war is unmanly, shameful, cruel, wicked, still I must not refuse the taxes that are demanded for its support. I am unable then to conceive the case, in which individuals may hazard social order for the purpose of relieving themselves from disabilities which demand from them no agency whether direct or indirect, and cannot, therefore, involve their consciences in sin. Thus the line of private duty is usually clear, although, when it has been transgressed, the deviations from it may raise questions for the State such as defy solution.

66. But now let us examine what is the legitimate canon of the action of the State. Christian maxims, which enjoin a sufferer to bear wrong, do not permit a superior in power to inflict it. The State must not therefore disqualify, simply for the reason that the

subject seems bound in the last resort to submit to disqualification. The general rule of the State must be, to seek for the discharge of civil duties the most competent men. And yet this must be with relation to circumstances; for clearly it is not obliged to secure absolutely the ablest men for all public employments, or to claim the exercise of a pre-emptive right upon the services of every individual in the nation; that then to which it is bound really is, to prefer the more able to the less, when both can be had; to apply to candidates for office all the practicable criteria of competency. According to these principles, the question which we are now considering is not whether the State has any right to injure or punish for religious non-conformity, but simply in what manner it is to provide the fittest persons for the discharge of what we have ascertained by the previous inquiry to be its duties.

67. Now a certain grade of understanding, in a form of instruction more or less professional according to the particular case, is one of these criteria. Christian holiness and purity of life is another; for surely no man will dispute that *cæteris paribus* political duties would be better performed, if they were always intrusted to those who make it their first study in life to follow the Redeemer. Profession of the national faith is another of these criteria; lower than the last, yet naturally and obviously tending to realise the spiritual element in the national life, both externally, and as connected with the necessary inward dispositions. A morality reaching some standard of social decorum is the last criterion that I shall name; and is

requisite, according to the lowest theory of the obligations of the State, to guarantee the fidelity of the functionary himself, and to avoid public scandal.

68. Of these criteria the first and the last belong to the lower forms of nationality, the second and the third to the higher. The former pair are the most absolutely required, but also the least permanently beneficial. By them a State has material consistency and life; but with them it may sink into moral death. As, however, the second criterion of fitness is the one which ultimately would most conduce to the realisation of a perfect national life, so also it is the one which under the conditions of humanity the State can hardly ever ascertain and secure. Indeed, if this criterion were practicable, I know not whether there might not be an absolute and indefeasible obligation to apply it, and a positive sin in using any other without it. For it implies not a condition or presumption of moral excellence, but excellence itself. And as the third is, next to the second, most allied with the morality of the national life, so also it is one, the beneficial working of which absolutely presupposes a degree both of religious and also of national coherency, a moral freshness and youth, a love and a pursuit of truth among the people, keen as that of the morning hunter,* without which it can be no better than the very skeleton of a corpse long ago abandoned by its informing spirit.

69. No: God still in practice vindicates, sufficiently for full attestation, the law of national oneness,

* Coleridge.

by the experienced impossibility of reversing its conditions, by the essential parallelism of all the motions of life in the State and in the people. A people that morally lives, will naturally throw itself into aggregate and social forms that throb sympathetically and answer to its own impulses. A people morally dead will not create, nor long endure, institutions that are impregnated with moral life. The State must die also: though the vital flame will flicker yet about the nobler region of the heart, though

The grudging ghost doth strive with the frail flesh,*

yet, if the limbs be cold for ever, the struggle cannot long continue.

Vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.†

Yet is it indeed a gallant and a stirring sight, when a ruler, whose soul is lighted with the flame of other days, battles painfully, unsuccessfully, hopelessly, against a degenerate time, like a lofty ship against the insuperable tempest. To see Clarendon and Southampton in the polluted court of Charles the Second; or, in ancient times, to see Phocion in Athens, the second Agis in Lacedæmon; Theodosius, Boniface, Belisarius, amidst the colossal ruins of the Roman empire; for these are husbandmen whose toil is spent freely through a faith in unseen good and surely somewhere in the future it shall grow into a golden harvest.

70. These therefore are the laws of reason and ex-

* Spenser, i. ii. 19.

† Æn. xii. 952.

perience. Yet the State is an agent. It surely must not yield, before it has expended the resources of its agency. It has a power, a mighty power, to act upon the people, as well as a liability to be acted upon by them. Inasmuch, therefore, as dissidence, taken in the whole, however the rule may be qualified or even reversed in particular cases, implies a failure in one of the conditions of full national life; it also implies a defect, be it more or be it less, of competency for public office, whose holders act on behalf of the nation. The State, therefore, in certain circumstances, may disqualify. It does not thereby persecute, because it inflicts a negative penalty, not for its own sake, but incidentally and by the way, while it is engaged in seeking the most competent men who are to be had for its instruments. It does not, under such a supposition, exclude a man with the intention that he may suffer, but because he wants one of the conditions of fitness which it has the power to secure elsewhere. Accordingly the State of England uses disqualification to a moderate, and (as I think) prudent and warrantable extent. It excludes on account of religion, not from the franchise, but from municipal and political office generally, those who decline to found their promise to fulfil its duties aright "upon the faith of a Christian." So runs the oath, or declaration, which political officers elect are bound to make.

71. I will not pursue far through the labyrinth of detail the intricate questions of political duty which arise in this portion of my subject. Let me, however, suppose a case, in which the friends of a national

religion hold the *insignia* of power; where its adversaries evidently preponderate in the possession of equally real though less recognised and determinate social forces, and evidently menace violence and convulsion. Now we are agreed, that religion as religion ought not to be upheld by physical power. But in the case supposed, religion is law. Shall it not be defended as law? If not, what means the omnipotence of a legislature, the supremacy of law? If one law may be disobeyed and remain without vindication, so may the rest; where, then, is public order? Or if the legislature hasten to repeal the law, is not the upshot practically the same? Upon the other hand, there is perhaps a point, at which force itself becomes not only inappropriate but ineffective for maintaining those elements of suasion, which may have found a place in public legislation, and which undoubtedly may imply coercion in a secondary sense; that is to say, the maintenance of actual law against violence, or the levy of funds to support establishments, as for art, learning, or religion. I am not able to define in terms the point at which the firm control of rebellious parts becomes perilous to the corporate existence of the whole, and at which therefore it must be abandoned. But in any view it is socially a most mischievous result, as well as one implying guilt in its wilful authors, when the *fasces* of public authority require to be lowered in deference to the exactions of the disorganising principle of partial and private will.

72. It may, however, possibly be said, that to admit that cases may arise in which deviation from the idea

of State religion is to be allowed without the employment by its friends, even to force, of the legal power actually in their hands for the prevention of such a calamity, is a sacrifice of principle to expediency. It may, I admit, be such; it is even likely to be such; but it should not and need not be such. It might rather be an accommodation similar to those which have been delivered to us upon the authority of the highest precedents. Such was the act of Moses, the legislator of God, when by reason of the hardness of the Israelitish heart he allowed to the nation a licence of divorce incompatible with the genuine conception of the marriage union.* Such was the act of God Himself, when, condescending to their sensual temperament, He gave them a king that their eyes could see and their hands handle, instead of His own immediate sovereignty.† As it is vain to confer the best institutions on a people unprepared for them, so it may be impossible to retain them when they have lost the fitness they once possessed; and that impossibility may often be well discerned without an appeal to force. But the people will suffer by its own degradation, and the offering, which was demanded by their depraved appetite, will whet their hunger and exasperate their disease. And as they lower the tone of the governing function, they will also lower the tone of those who discharge it, and mar in the same proportion the prospects of national felicity.

73. In a former section we arrived at the enuncia-

* Matt. xix. 8.

+ Judges viii. 7.

tion of a general limiting law for the extrinsic action of the State upon the people in matter of religion. To this limiting law let us add, as among the palpable results of the foregoing discussions, these maxims of practical policy.

1. The wise State, or the provident statesman, must be studious to discern in their initial forms those movements in the body politic which threaten, in the event of their reaching maturity, to produce a crisis, in order that he may either resist them with effect, or concede to them with grace ; or, by dividing the subaltern forces that compose and impel them, reduce their strength to insignificance.

2. With this rule he will combine another. Before resigning to clamour, pertinacity, and a disobedient spirit, anything that is of magnitude and value in its bearings upon the invigoration of national life, he will probe the national mind and heart upon the subject, to ascertain whether there be not latent there other more peaceful but not less powerful convictions, which may be able to make good an effectual resistance ; and he will manifest, at least, every personal disposition to give free and full scope to the action of those convictions ; so that he will neither strain the action of the State upon the people, nor shrink from making a fair experiment of its effects.

3. The last canon must likewise be limited in its turn, in order that it may not destroy itself in practice, by his being careful to warn those who hold in their hands the little weights that, when collected,

sway the scales of social power, that they must fairly accept the consequences of popular institutions, and, having allowed the causes of innovation to become active, must keep the elements of guardianship, which are entrusted to their own hands, in a state of corresponding energy. While the might of law repressed the former, the State needed not to tax the latter, but did their work for them vicariously, and, as it were, mechanically. They must now adapt their habits to its altered system; just as, where there is no constabulary, the inhabitants must keep the peace.

4. Together with these precepts it will follow, that the friends of any contested principle, say of national religion, throughout the nation at large, must not rely on the State to overbear, as by an extrinsic weight, the permanently and morally preponderating sentiment of the nation, but must trust, under God, for the right composition and direction of the State itself, to the enlightened rectitude of that conscience that is in each man as man, and that never fails to answer to fidelity of spiritual culture by corresponding results. The State can only hear advice, or yield to suasion, or imbibe the spirit of genuine improvement, through the medium of the individuals of whom it is composed.

5. The last and greatest maxim of practical conduct, which the theory of connection between Church and State inculcates upon the individual, is, the personal avoidance of all that leads to religious divisions. We cannot but see how they tend to every social evil, and how they are faithful to the source from which they arise; what dilemmas defying solution they are in-

trinsically calculated to produce ; how they draw law into disrepute and dishonour, and either at once shake social order to its centre and its base, or, by robbing the State successively of all the conditions of a true national life, carry political organisation and the nature of a State out of the place to which God appointed them into one for which He appointed them not. The very obscurity, which from this cause overhangs the determination of political problems, does but the more illustrate the bright and broad light which Scripture throws upon the line of private duty, when it declares that parties in religion are the sign and the result of a carnal mind.*

74. I am more than satisfied, without pretending to any feat of controversial arms, if we bring back from the labour of this inquiry any acquisition of practical rules, and any influence tending to confirm and elevate our mental habits ; and we must not be dismayed at inability to obviate beforehand, in such subject-matter, all the forms either of danger or of objection. Be it, however, recollected, that those persons have a very great polemical advantage, who in the philosophy and practice of politics may be inclined to lower the tone of actually existing institutions, in conformity with a prevailing inclination of temporary opinion ; and this most of all in a country where that tone has originally been pitched, as to its theory, so high, that the faultiness of our human nature and conduct must needs fall greatly short of it. They are as men who float along a stream or who drive down a slope ; gravitation nearly

* 1 Cor. iii. 3.

does their work, and the chief part of what is required of them is a little to moderate the rate of the descent. As controversialists they are placed in a position of great relative facility. Their theories are new and bright-burnished—they have not yet been exposed to the rough weather of experience; and we know not whether they will thaw in the sun, or crack in the frost, or leak to the rain, or perish, with a crash as of thunder, in the tempest. Every application of principles must under the law of things human be defective; and the more the subject-matter is complex, and the range of the application wide, the more numerous must be the flaws which it is the business of the objector to count and to exhibit, and not unfrequently to exaggerate or to feign.

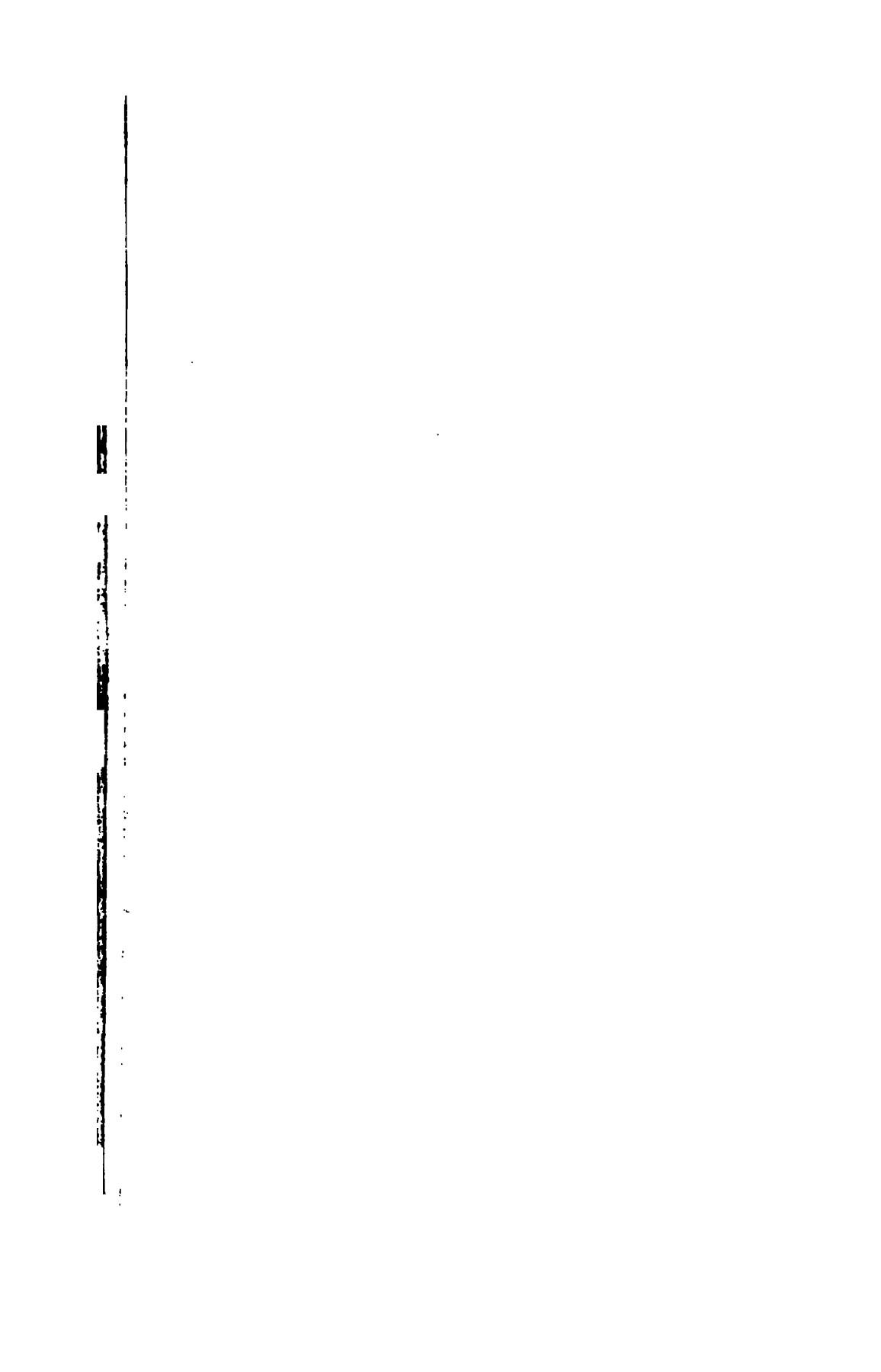
75. And while he is discharging this his function, he administers a perpetual balsam to the smarting consciences of those possessors of unappreciated and undeveloped blessings, who were, perhaps, beginning to awaken to a sense of their past neglect and of their present and instant duties; who had been warned from without by menacing omens, and from within by the rising motions of the heart, that they must change either their principles or their practice; who, having been thus led to the examination of both, had found in the one the lineaments of ancient glory and of forgotten truth, in the other the guilt of a disobedience indulged in spite of knowledge; whose self-love and indolence were not strong enough, if unaided from without, entirely to quench the generous resolution to make an attempt at raising the practice towards the

principles; but in whom, as in most men, the scales seem to quiver even when good preponderates, and nothing is wanted but an ingenious display, on the one hand, of the defects, the inconveniences, the anomalies with which the application of those principles ever has been marred, and, on the other, of the gay wardrobe which has never yet been weather-beaten, to turn the uncertain balance of opinion; and so, without further question, men relax their high mental and moral tension, acquiesce in the promptings of their lower nature, and escape from the pain which the previous discrepancy has occasioned them, by gradually and gently lowering their principles towards the level of their practice. But the poison rankles within; and the nation,

— graves oculos conata attollere, rursus
Deficit; infixum stridet sub pectore vulnus.*

* *AEn.* iv. 688.

END OF VOL. I

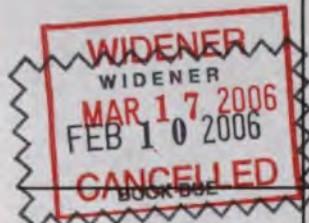




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